

ANTHOLOGY OF EUROPEAN POETRY

Volume One

FROM MACHAULT TO MALHERBE

ANTHOLOGY OF EUROPEAN POETRY
VOLUME ONE

IN FRENCH AND ENGLISH



FROM MACHAULT
TO MALHERBE

13th to 17th century

TRANSLATED BY
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INTRODUCTION BY
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CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION <i>Marcel Arland</i>	13
GUILLAUME DE MACHAULT (1290-1377)	
<i>Blanche com lys, plus que rose vermeille</i>	30
White as the lily, redder than rose	31
JEAN FROISSART (1337-1410)	
<i>Sus toutes flours tient on la rose d' belle</i>	30
They say the rose above all flowers is fair	31
EUSTACHE DESCHAMPS (1328-1415)	
<i>Or n'est il fleur, odour ne violette</i>	32
There is no violet, scent, nor flower so fair	33
CHRISTINE DE PISAN (XIV ^e siècle)	
<i>Rians vairs yeulx, qui mon cuer avez pris</i>	36
Laughing green eyes, you have won all my heart	37
CHARLES D'ORLEANS (1391-1465)	
<i>En regardant vers le pais de France</i>	36
Looking one day toward the coast of France	37
<i>Le temps a laissé son manteau</i>	38
Time has lost her wintry gear	39
<i>Les fourriers d'este sont venuz</i>	40
Summer's harbingers are here	41
<i>Priez pour paix, douce vierge Marie</i>	42
Pray for peace, sweet Virgin Mary Blessed	43
OLIVIER BASSELIN (XV ^e siècle)	
<i>Beau nez, dont les rublx ont courté maints pippe</i>	46
Fair nose, full many a barrel have I paid	47
<i>Que Noë fut un patriarche digne</i>	48
Old Noah was a patriarch great and fine	49
AUTEUR INCONNU (XV ^e siècle)	
<i>Gentils gallans de France</i>	50
Ye gentle knights of France	51

Contents

	Page
FRANÇOIS VILLON (1431- ?)	52
<i>Dictes-moy où, n'en quel pays</i>	53
Tell me where she now doth fare	54
<i>Quoi plus! Où est le tiers Calixte</i>	55
Nay more! Where's now the third Calixte	56
<i>Dame du ciel, regente terrienne,</i>	57
Lady of Heaven, and Regent of the Earth	58
<i>Quoy qu'on tient belles langagieres</i>	59
In Florence, and in Venice, too	60
<i>Car or' soyés porteur de bulles</i>	61
Now whether you are a pardoner	64
<i>Ayez pitie, ayez pitie de moy</i>	65
Oh pity me, my friends and comrades all	66
<i>Freres humains, qui apres nous vivez</i>	67
Oh living men, who after us dwell here	68
<i>Que dictes-vous de mon Appel</i>	69
Tell me, Garnier, what do you think	70
<i>En reagal, en arsenic rocher</i>	71
In yellow orpiment, realgar red	74
<i>Or y pensez, belle Gantiere</i>	75
Fair glover's maid, bethink you, dear	76
<i>Fortune fuz par clercez jadis nommee</i>	77
The Scriveners, once, gave me the name of Fortune	78
<i>Pere Noé, qui plantastes la vigne</i>	79
O Father Noah, who didst plant the vine	
MELLIN DE SAINT-GELAIS (1491-1558)	80
<i>Je prie à Dieu qu'il vous doint pauvrete</i>	81
I pray to God that He may make you poor	82
<i>Un charlatan disoit en plein marché</i>	83
A charlatan once said in the market square	
MARGUERITE DE NAVARRE (1492-1549)	84
<i>Un ami vif vint à la dame morte</i>	85
A living lover sought his mistress dead	

Contents

CLÉMENT MAROT (1495-1544)	Page
<i>Au bon vieulx temps, un train d'amour regnoit</i>	84
In olden times did love hold sway	85
<i>Riche ne suis, certes, je le confesse</i>	86
I' faith, I am not rich, nor like to be	87
<i>Voulientiers en ce moys icy</i>	88
How gladly in the month of May	89
<i>Monsieur l'Abbe et monsieur son valet</i>	90
My lord the Abbot and his valet	91
<i>Changeons propos, c'est trop chanté d'amours</i>	90
This is too much of love, let's change the tune	91
<i>Ne sçay combien la haine est dure</i>	92
I do not know how hard is hate	93
BONAVENTURE DES PERIERS (XVI ^e siècle)	
<i>Un jour de may, que l'aube retournée</i>	94
As dawn arose one morn in May	95
ANTOINE HÉROËT (? -1568)	
<i>Cœur prisonnier, je le vous disois bien</i>	96
Captive heart, did I not tell you clear	97
MAURICE SCÈVE (1511-1564)	
<i>Comme Hecate tu me feras errer</i>	98
Like Hecate thou wilt have me roam about	99
CHRISTOPHE PLANTIN (1514-1589)	
<i>Avoir une maison commode, propre et belle</i>	100
To have a home of comfort, neat and clean	101
PERNETTE DU GUILLET (1520-1545)	
<i>O vraye amour, dont je suis prise</i>	102
True love, to whom my heart is prey	103
PONTUS DE TYARD (1521-1605)	
<i>Pere du doux repos, Sommeil pere du songe</i>	104
Father of gentle rest and dreams arise	105

Contents

JOACHIM DU BELLAY (1525-1560)	Page
<i>Je hay plus que la mort un jeune casanier</i>	106
Young stay-at-home I hate beyond compare	107
<i>France, mere des arts, des armes, et des loix</i>	106
France! Mother of arts, and arms, and laws	107
<i>Flatter un creditur, pour son terme allonger</i>	108
To flatter a creditor and win remand	109
<i>Deja la nuit en son parc amassait</i>	110
Now in her meadowland has glorious Night	111
<i>En ce moys delicieux</i>	112
In this month of delight	113
<i>Heureux qui, comme Ulysse, a fait un beau voyage</i>	114
Happy is he who journeys everywhere	115
<i>Si nostre vie est moins qu'une journee</i>	116
If this our life is no more than a day	117
<i>Comme le champ semé en verdure foisonne</i>	116
Just as a new sown field is lush with green	117
<i>A vous, troupe legere</i>	118
To you light winds I sing	119
<i>Comme lon void de loing sur la mer courroucee</i>	120
As from afar the angry waves are seen	121
JEAN DE BAÏF (1522-1589)	
<i>Un jour, quand de l'yver l'ennuieuse froidure</i>	122
One day when winter's tedious cold sheen	123
PIERRE DE RONSARD (1524-1585)	
<i>Comme on voit sur la branche au mois de mai la rose</i>	122
Just as in early May a rose in flower	123
<i>Si c'est aimer, Madame, et de jour et de nuit</i>	124
If this is love, my Lady, night and day	125
<i>Une beaute de quinze ans enfantine</i>	126
A childlike beauty rich in fifteen years	127

Contents

PIERRE DE RONSARD (1524-1585)— <i>cont.</i>		<i>Page</i>
<i>Nuit, des amours ministre, et ministre fidelle</i>		128
Dark Night, great Minister of Love, how faithfully		129
<i>O Fontaine Bellerie</i>		130
Fountain of Bellerie		131
<i>Mignonne, allons voir si la rose</i>		132
Come, my darling, let us see the rose		133
<i>Adieu belle Cassandre, et vous belle Marie</i>		134
Cassandra, dear, farewell, and beautiful Marie		135
<i>Ma petite Nymphé Macée</i>		134
My little nymph, Macée		135
<i>Je vous envoie un bouquet que ma main</i>		138
I send you now a sheaf of fairest flowers		139
<i>Quand vous serez bien vieille, au soir, à la chandelle</i>		138
When you are old, at evening by the fire		139
<i>Bel aubespín fleurissant</i>		140
Beautiful hawthorn tree in flower		141
<i>Escoute, bucheron, arrête un peu le bras</i>		142
Hold a while, woodman, stay your arm and hear		143
LOUISE LABÉ (1526-1566)		
<i>O beaux yeux bruns, o regards destournez</i>		146
Oh beautiful brown eyes, looks turned aside		147
<i>Tant que mes yeux pourront larmes espandre</i>		148
As long as tears do well up in my eyes		149
REMY BELLEAU (1528-1577)		
<i>C'estoit en la saison que la troupe rustique</i>		150
It was the time of year when all the rustic crew		151
<i>Lune porte-flambeau, seule fille héritière</i>		152
High burning brand, bright moon, the only heir		153
<i>Mon Dieu, mon Dieu, quel plaisir est-ce</i>		154
Dear God, what joy it is to me		155

Contents

GUY DE PIBRAC (1529-1584)	Page 154
<i>Le soleil cependant vers l'occident decline</i>	155
Meanwhile the setting sun sinks down into the West	
OLIVIER DE MAGNY (1530-1561)	158
<i>Serrez bien longuement un seigneur aujourd'huy</i>	159
Assiduously serve some lord of state	160
<i>Vivons heureux, puis donc qu'il est ainsi</i>	161
Let us live happily, since this is so	162
<i>Bienheureux est celui qui, loin de la cité</i>	163
Blessed is he who far from city's press	
ESTIENNE DE LA BOÉTIE (1530-1563)	164
<i>C'estoit alors, quand, les chaleurs passees</i>	165
It was the time when summer heats were passed	
LES DAMES DES ROCHES (1530?-1587)	166
<i>Quenouille, mon soucy, je vous promets et jure</i>	167
Distaff, my pride and care, I vow to thee	
ESTIENNE JODELLE (1532-1573)	168
<i>Comme un qui s'est perdu dans la forest profonde</i>	169
As one far lost within a woodland deep	168
<i>J'aime le verd laurier, dans l'hiver ni la glace</i>	169
I love the green laurel, which winter's cold embrace	
JEAN PASSERAT (1534-1602)	170
<i>Empistolés au visage noirci</i>	171
Ye black-faced warriors, come not near	172
<i>Mais où est maintenant ceste puissante armee</i>	173
But where is now this army, mighty force	174
<i>L'an recommence sa carriere</i>	175
The year begins his course again	
ROBERT GARNIER (1534-1590)	176
<i>Pauvres filles de Sion</i>	177
Poor daughters of Zion	

Contents

VAUQUELIN DE LA FRESNAYE (1536-1606?)	Page
Du paresseux sommeil où tu gis endormie	180
From idle sleep where thou hast lain so long	181
<i>Nous sommes filles de village</i>	182
Lowly village maids are we	183
Comme en la vigne on void, dessous la feuille verte	184
Just as beneath the green leaf of the vine	185
SCÉVOLE DE SAINTE-MARTHE (1536-1623)	
J'ay passé mon printemps, mon este, mon automne	184
My spring, my summer and autumn are now all sped	185
AMADIS JAMYN (1540-1585)	
Estant couché pres les ruchettes	188
Beside the hives as once I lay	189
MARIE STUART (1542-1587)	
Adieu, plaisant pays de France	190
Farewell, O fairest country without peers	191
GUILLAUME DU BARTAS (1544-1590)	
Ses paturons sont courts, ni trop droicts, ni luncz	190
Short are his pasterns, not too straight nor bent	191
JEAN DE LA CEPPÈDE (1546-1622)	
Les escadrons aislez du celeste pourpris	192
The pinioned squadrons of the crimson sky	193
Blanc est le vestement du grand Pere sans age	194
White is the raiment of the ageless Sire	195
PHILIPPE DESPORTES (1546-1606)	
Pourquoy si folement croyez-vous à un verre	196
Why trust you to a glass so foolishly	197
Icare est cheut ici, le jeune audacieux	196
Hère did Icarus fall, the hardy youth	197
Las! que nous sommes miserables	198
Alas! are we not wretched, then	199

Contents

PHILIPPE DESPORTES (1546-1622)— <i>cont.</i>	Page
<i>O bienheureux qui peut passer sa vie</i>	204
Happy indeed is he who spends his life	205
<i>Rozette, pour un peu d'absence</i>	208
Rozette, in shortest time away	209
GILLES DURANT (1550-1615)	
<i>Un soir le long de l'eau elle marchoit pensive</i>	210
One evening by the water as she strayed	211
THÉODORE-AGRIPPA D'AUBIGNÉ (1550?-1630)	
<i>Mes volages humeurs, plus sterilles que belles</i>	210
My fleeting humours, barren more than fair	211
<i>Mais quoi! C'est trop chanté, il faut tourner les yeux</i>	214
But stay! Enough of song, my eyes must turn	215
FRANÇOIS DE MALHERBE (1555-1628)	
<i>Que mon fils ait perdu sa dépouille mortelle</i>	218
That death should now have borne my son away	219
<i>Jeanne, tandis que tu fus belle</i>	220
Jeanne, when you were fair	221
<i>Louez Dieu par toute la terre</i>	222
Praise be to God on high	223
<i>Beaute, mon beau souci, de qui l'ame incertaine</i>	224
Beauty, my fairest care, whose unsure soul	225
<i>Beaux et grands batiments d'éternelle structure</i>	226
Mighty, constructions of immortal line	227
ANTOINE DE MONTCHRESTIEN (1575-1621)	
<i>Par Paulet, son geolier, la reine estoit conduite</i>	226
Paulet, the jailer, led the Queen along	227

INTRODUCTION

by Marcel Arland

POETRY is the deepest expression and the purest creation of mankind. To-day, when the nations are beginning to recover from their wounds, when they are emerging from an agony which seemed unending, nothing (it seems to us) is of greater value than the spiritual exchanges which are now taking place, thus pouring into the common treasury of mutual welfare the individual achievements of each nation. We cannot be too grateful, therefore, for the enterprise of Mervyn Savill and William Stirling, who, with the sureness of good taste, have selected the most revealing works of French poetry, and by translating them are able to offer not only an anthology, but a varied and faithful picture of that poetry to the English public.

The poetry of France is like her painting: you are struck at once by its continuity. This does not mean that it is always brilliant, for it has known its hours of weakness—as, for instance, in the eighteenth century, when the highest lyrical quality was embodied in a prose-writer, Rousseau—but from the Middle Ages down to the present day it has continually developed along the same lines. Nor does this mean that it has always enjoyed a peaceful evolution, nor that it has not, from time to time, denied to-day what it worshipped yesterday. It is well known that for two centuries Ronsard and the *Pléiade* were held in great discredit; the glory of Agrippa d'Aubigné is still something new and fresh to us; and it is a bare fifty years since the Lyonnese school, like the *précieux*, grotesque, and baroque schools, have found favour again.

French poetry is not tied down to one school or tradition, however glorious these may be. It is not limited to oratorical beauty or the power of incantation, nor to splendid imagery or profundity of thought, nor to novelty, nor to the force of sentiments which it expresses. Some of these characteristics may indeed predominate in certain periods, and so you have Malherbe; or you have Racine or Baudelaire; or Hugo, Rimbaud or Claudel; or Valéry; or Baudelaire again, or Verlaine, or Apollinaire, or Agrippa . . . But it is perhaps the sovereign virtue of French poetry; that it can lend itself

INTRODUCTION

in turn to each of these characteristics, uniting them—in its finest moments—into an almost miraculously balanced whole.

At once the simplest and the most esoteric, the most natural and yet sometimes the most carefully constructed, there is nothing which this poetry has not attempted, no ambition which it has not sought to realise. And of nearly all these attempts, it may be said that they have been carried through to extreme lengths. But in moving from one phase to another, French poetry has always borne in mind the land and race where it grew up, subject to their laws. To be sure, you cannot force it to conform to these laws, but you must indeed have little knowledge of French poetry if you do not feel their presence and action.

French poetry has this in common with French prose: if there is one feature of it which we may hold essential, it is *quality*. By this I mean a mixture of boldness and modesty, the appreciation of a strict agreement between a man, his subject, and his words; and a regard for the unusual, not in anyway because of its strangeness, but because of what it represents in the field of individual achievement—in fine, the cult of a perfection which is itself nothing more than elegant decency and a means of expression that is confident in the destiny of art, of human effort, and of a pure and universal language.

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The first volume of this selection takes the reader through more than three centuries of poetry, dominated by the figures of Villon, Ronsard, Agrippa d'Aubigné, and Malherbe. Even if this does not go right back to the very beginnings of French poetry (thus following the lead of most of the anthologies which appear in France), it does give us the spectacle of its complete formation, leads us through one of the most brilliant centuries of French poetry, and ends up on the very threshold of the classical period. In such a way, indeed, that one might say that this volume on its own would suffice to illustrate the amazing diversity of one and the same genius.

All the same, it would be impossible to get a clear picture of the work of the fourteenth-century poets with which this book opens,

INTRODUCTION

without first placing them within an already long line of poets. When Machault, Froissart, and Deschamps appeared on the scene, French lyric poetry had already been in existence for two centuries. Even setting aside poetry written in the old Provençal tongue, the poetry of the old troubadours (Coucy, Gace Brûlé, Thibaut de Champagne—and countless popular ballads and songs) delights us yet by its rare elegance. Though it is not devoid of monotony in subject and form, though it is more vivacious than impassioned, nevertheless, artless and artful at the same time, mingling realism—even brutality—into its quintessence, it draws a picture of women and love which French poets, many years later, were to take up again; and the allegories of the *Roman de la Rose* were to flower again in Arthénice's "*chambre bleue*". Even the thirteenth century did not want for a poet—a really great poet: this was the author of *Dict de la Griesche d'Yver*, of *Complainte d'Outre-Mer*, of *Dict des Ribaux de Greire*, and of *IX Joies de Notre Dame*. The poet was Rutebeuf, who heralded and paved the way for Villon. His hard, harsh accents, the mocking bitterness, the satirical wrath, the eloquence of noble causes, and here and there a note almost of Verlaine himself—how these things strike us, and move us even to-day!

Indeed, after Rutebeuf, his immediate successors seem rather tame. Not that they were negligible poets: Machault, skilful almost to the point of virtuosity, gave greater flexibility and variety to the verse rhythms; Froissart, a greater prose writer than poet (he was the greatest prose writer of the century), lacked neither harmony nor vivacity, and showed sometimes an unexpected touch; Eustache Deschamps perfected the *ballade*, giving it a new force, firmness, and even greater scope; and Christine de Pisan, with her laments and her conceits, affects us in the same way as, five centuries later, Marceline Desbordes-Valmore was to do. But, after all, none of these would suffice for the glory of a century, not even Pierre de Nesson, the poet of the graveyard, nor the penniless poet Michault Taillevent, who cleared the path for Villon, nor Alain Chartier, with his strange and subtle rhetoric of love. The fourteenth century, in poetry, seems to have been a century of

INTRODUCTION

perfecting, preparing, and endeavouring. Endeavours that were to be doubly crowned, since from them sprang Charles d'Orléans and Villon.

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It has been said of the one that he was the last poet of the Middle Ages, and of the other that he was the first poet of modern times. It is a pleasant formula, but a scholar's formula. Villon, in more than one point, links up with the Middle Ages; whereas Charles d'Orléans breaks away from the Middle Ages in many ways which were later to be prolonged through Marot, the Pléiade, Théophile, La Fontaine, Musset, and Verlaine. . . . In the almost simultaneous appearance of two such different figures with such different poetry, French poetry might well behold a sign of its wealth and destiny.

The one is all grace and refinement. But it is a moving grace, a delicate tenderness, and filled with freshness. During his exile in England, Prince Charles had no less to say than Villon. But he refused to make too naked an avowal. With exquisite delicacy his complaint stops short with a twist of the words, not, however, before revealing the wound beneath. There has never been such a free, spontaneous poet—not even Marot or Musset; compared with him, Heine seems stilted. Once he has found two words, he begins to sing. He was a born singer. He is the most delightful companion that we have in France, a pure poet, naturally elegant, restrained, without emphasis, without heaviness, but never without a tremor.

The other poet is Villon, the strongest, most impassioned, most poignant voice that France had ever yet heard, and so much so, that no other poet since has been able to silence him. Five centuries have passed, but the *Grand Testament* remains one of the summits of our lyric poetry. There you will find a complete man, a vagabond, a rogue, a cut-throat, who, out of his sorry adventures, his regrets, his sudden impulses, and his dreams, succeeded in making a song wherein every man can see himself. He remains one of the most popular figures of France (what Frenchman does not know

INTRODUCTION

at least his ballad to *Les Dames du Temps jadis*?); the most subjective poet which France had yet given, but also the most human, and the most general; the most forceful, and the most varied in his mastery of the language, science of rhythm, inspiration, eloquent concision, powerful imagery, and the intimate union, in his poetry, of vigorous symbolism and melodious harmony.

Could there be any newer, stronger, or more needful lesson than Villon's? This is what he says to poets: "Poetry isn't just a simple game. All the wit, all the knowledge, all the refinements that you bring to your verses are as nothing, or almost nothing, if you do not bring also the deepest part of yourselves. Poetry isn't just a correct assembling of sounds and images; it is the profound song of a man. It buries its roots deep down in the human heart; and from there it draws its sap; and it is there that it finds the essential condition for its efficacy and its permanence."

One may well be surprised that the lesson of such a poet should have been lost for such a long time. Villon wrote his *Grand Testament* in 1463; but it was not until three-quarters of a century had elapsed that poetry, at first discreetly, with Marot (a great admirer of Villon—he published an edition of his work), began to play its part again. Between these two dates there is nothing, or almost nothing, but poetic pedantries and amazing rhetoric. With the possible exception of Jean le Maire des Belges, there is not one of these rhetoricians who produced the least personal note at all; although, by reason of his avid curiosity of mind, by some of his subjects, by his lovely love of nature, and on more than one occasion, by the tone of his verse, Jean le Maire may be considered as an imitator, serving as a link between the *Roman de la Rose* and the Lyonnese school (if not the *Pléiade* itself). But even so, it is a relief to come to Marot.

I do not suggest that Marot fills the gap for us, nor that he is a fair answer to what one would expect of a poet after Villon. His limitations are all too clear: they are exact, and enclose a fairly restricted domain. But within these limitations is Marot, surely the most *gentil* spirit there has ever been, and, even in his courtly witticisms, one of the most natural. He is the poet of elegant

INTRODUCTION

trifles, as Boileau said; but trifles which never lack piquancy. He was a pleasing person, a good fellow, openly bantering; and sometimes, as in his epigram on Semblançay, he achieved a remarkably virile tone. And then too, is it not an enviable title to have been one of La Fontaine's masters?

We cannot leave Marot without mentioning the name of Mellin de Saint-Gelais, the first and best of his followers. Nor must we forget Marot's patron, Margaret of Navarre, *Marguerite des Princesses*, daughter, sister, and wife of kings, the author of the *Heptameron*, the best collection of stories which had so far appeared in France. As a poet, she showed in her love poems, even as in her religious verse, an extraordinarily pure delicacy, a subtle naïveté, and an almost mystic fervour. I know that she has more faults than anyone else: but this was usually due to an inexhaustible fund of inspiration, which was not always guided by a sure sense of rhythm. And I know that in her work there are allegories, repetitions, and much idle gossip. But her charm is very personal and lively, and makes us love her—she who was a noble and good woman, and so worthy of our admiration.

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If the spiritual aspirations and idealistic tendencies of Margaret of Navarre foretold the first works of the Pléiade, more intimately still are they bound to the spirit of the Lyonnese school. Neglected for long, the works of this admirable school enjoy to-day a new favour, thanks to the conquest of symbolism, and to the efforts of certain great men of letters: of Valéry Larbaud above all. Many a time, in the course of the last few years, have the poems of Louise Labé been republished; and Maurice Scève's *Délie* is read, commented on, and justly praised. Only Antoine Héroët, the theoretician of perfect love, of love as the fundament of existence, of wealth and of happiness—that Bishop Héroët, who came to God by way of Plato, whom Marot respected, whom Ronsard and the Pléiade greeted as a precursor—only he has not yet recovered the place he deserves. Nevertheless, what charm is to be discovered in his *Parfaite Amye*, his *rondeau Cœur Prisonnier*, or *Complainte*

INTRODUCTION

d'une Dame—despite a somewhat archaic versification, certain rather heavy passages, and an amount of artificial detail. He is both surer and acuter than Guillaume de Loris, the author of the first *Roman de la Rose*; and some aspects of his philosophy of love are not unworthy of Marivaux.

Certainly, though, he bows to Maurice Scève, the principal poet of the school. But then there is no poet more thoroughly bred than Maurice Scève, nor one who has a more inflexible consciousness of his art (in spite of the tedious amphigory where so many researches and contentions sometimes hold sway), or who has achieved such rare tones: whether it be in *La Saulsaye*, the *Microcosme*, or, above all, in *Délie*, his lines disclose that secret perfection and that proud purity wherein shelters an ardent soul—whether it be that they are inflected with a lovely harmony such as we shall scarcely find again in Nerval, Verlaine, or Mallarmé.

Near to Scève, at Maurice Scève's feet, we recognise the delicate and moving Pernette du Guillet, the poet's Delia. Here, too, is the most popular figure of the Lyonnese School—Louise Labé, *la belle cordière*, the most passionate and greatest of the Frenchwomen who have given themselves up to poetry. In the present collection two of her most beautiful sonnets are to be found. The close union of passion and spirit (sometimes wit), of ingenuous avowal and clever twist, of wistful playfulness; so much brilliance, good-will, self-offering, so much fervent naïveté in the expression of love (and here the flesh, too, makes itself heard); all these features of hers are at the same time those of her poetry, as ardent, subtle, and natural in its accent, as in its imagery and movement.

If we leave Pontus de Tyard to the last, "divine Tyard" as Du Bellay called him, it is undoubtedly because he cried out loud with a rather rougher verse; but it is also because, being in love with Louise Labé before he became a Bishop, and being one of Ronsard's masters (Daurat was the other) and, furthermore, one of the seven poets of the Pléiade, he naturally falls into an intermediary position between the Lyonnese school and the great movement of the poetic renaissance.

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INTRODUCTION

It was in 1828 that Sainte-Beuve, in his *Survey of Poetry in the Sixteenth Century*, undertook the task of lifting Ronsard and his friends out of the ill-repute where they had languished since Malherbe:

J'élève de mes mains l'autel expiatoire . . .

There is nothing stranger in all our literary history than that the poets of the Pléiade should have been scorned or unknown for more than two centuries. Now, at least, their glory seems secure from the vagaries of caprice, and we turn to them as towards some of the most authentic and generous manifestations of our poetry.

Although, however, they themselves did not create this poetry (as they sometimes thought they had), they did renew and considerably enrich it. They gave it more numerous and stronger roots, a more imperious urgency, and a vaster ambition. If they produced really new and great work, it was less on account of the originality of their theories or the flexibility of their rhythm, than by the diversity of their subject-matter, the volume of their voices, and their high conception of their rôles as poets. In spite of their research and the many influences they underwent, they were able to preserve their freshness and sparkling eloquence. They stand near the fountains of nature; and it is of man they always speak—and they do not speak as men so much as artists. Never had the name of poet assumed such a noble and full sense in France.

First, Ronsard: Pierre de Ronsard of Vendôme, around whom the new school was built, the master whom all acknowledged and followed, the poet of love and of the countryside, the poet of kings and of France.

None of our poets had such varied inspiration; and none knew better than he how to wed delicateness to force, grace to grandeur, and how to retain freshness through nearly all his works. One must say "nearly," bearing in mind the *Franciade*, that dreadful and thankless effort to endow France with an epic poetry—which it had already possessed for three centuries; thinking also of the sonnets and odes, copied too learnedly from Pindar and Petrarch, though some of the odes (such as the one addressed to Michel de l'Hôpital) have great charm.

INTRODUCTION

But already, in the first odes, what charm and what a personal accent is to be found in the famous lines:

Mignonne, allons voir si la rose . . .

or in

Je vous envoie un bouquet que ma main . . .

The acute perception of the mortal world and of the sands of time running out, which was to permeate the whole of Ronsard's work, and that of his contemporaries—this sentiment, we admit, was nothing new: without having to go back as far as Horace and his *fugit irreparabile tempus*, we found it in Villon, and in the very midst of the fifteenth century; but with Ronsard it has nothing of the *danse macabre* about it. It is all sensual sadness, which makes enjoyment the more to be prized.

For no other period has had a more impatient or vaster love of life. All nature is summoned together before Ronsard, not only as a means of ornamentation, but as a beneficent friend, a source of Youth and Pleasure. And if Ronsard and his companions fill Nature with a host of nymphs and satyrs, if they make their princes and poets wander there in shepherds' smocks, one does not for that reason cease to enjoy the cool of a shade, or to hear the plashing of a fountain. It is the mixture of learned paganism and ardent sensuality which is given to us in the *Fontaine de Bellerie*. Sometimes Ronsard paints himself as a faun—even as a bull let loose in a meadow. But this same galliard poet can find, to mourn the death of a friend, the most chaste of accents:

Comme on voit sur la branche, au mois de mai, la rose . . .

Here he is hymning Marie, his second mistress: Marie the Angevin, whom he called the *Pin de Bourgueil*. He was thirty-one years old, and had lived almost exactly half his life. His work was soon to be amplified, and his inspiration become more profound and impassioned. He had the will-power and the consciousness of being a national poet for France. This was the period of the *Hymnes*, which were followed by the *Elégies* and the *Eglogues*. He sang of the seasons, of heaven, of gods, and of heroes. He sang

INTRODUCTION

of death. He loved nature with greater might than ever, and he told how nature aroused the poetic vocation in him; and in a famous elegy he reproached the woodcutters of the forest of Gastine for causing living blood to flow. As a great patriotic and satirical poet in his *Discours*, he joined in the religious discussions with a vehemence unequalled in all our poetry, with the exception of Agrippa d'Aubigné's *Tragiques*, Chénier's *Iambes*, and Victor Hugo's *Châtiments*.

However, he felt he was growing old. If the sonnets which he now composed for Hélène de Surgères were amongst the most moving of his love poems, this is due to an accent at once more serious and more profoundly human:

Quand vous serez bien vieille, au soir, à la chandelle . . .

In 1585, when Ronsard had almost reached the end, he saw four of the six poets who together with him had formed the Pléiade, disappear from the scene: his master, Daurat, his friend Du Bellay, Jodelle the tragic writer, and the gentle Rémi Belleau. There only remained Pontus de Tyard, who, having become a bishop, had taken leave of the Muses, and Baïf, his old schoolfellow from the days of the Collège de Coqueret. Even some of the younger poets, like Tahureau, Magny, Grévin, and La Boétie, were dead. Nor did Ronsard find the same favour with Henry III that had been accorded him by Charles IX. Mostly he dwelt in the country, near the Forest of Gastine and the Fountain of Bellerie. He saw new reputations springing up: that of Desportes, who had no less charm than talent. The times had changed, and Ronsard died not long after. He knew well the value of what he had left his country, but true to his old *Hymne à la Mort*, it was with a sense of deliverance that he greeted his approaching end in his last works. It was a great Christian and a great poet indeed who wrote:

Franc des liens du corps pour n'être qu'un esprit . . .

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The brilliant glory of Ronsard has in some measure clouded over Du Bellay. Yet the work of the Angevin poet would be

INTRODUCTION

sufficient in itself to illustrate a whole poetic school. His work is less abundant than Ronsard's, although it bears witness to a splendid fruitfulness—if we take into account that Du Bellay died at the age of thirty-nine, and bear in mind the number of poems which he wrote in Latin. His poetry is less varied in form, if not in inspiration, although there is no lack of diversity in work which stretched from the ode to the satire, and from the elegy to the sonnet. Principally, though, his work has not the royal easiness of the Master of the Pléiade. It has a more secret tone, nearer to reverie than confidence. Possibly one admires Du Bellay less whole-heartedly; but perhaps he moves us more. This restless, bruised, ailing man; this deep and delicate sensibility; this tender and violent man—finds a place within us, uncontested by any other poet of his time: the heart.

Even in the face of Ronsard's brilliance, Du Bellay was able to maintain his originality. If in the sonnets of *L'Olive*, he copies Petrarch, even as Ronsard did in his loves for Cassandra, how different are their voices! What draws Du Bellay to Petrarch is not only the exaggerated or the solemn images, not the flexible movement of line and thought, but also an idealism and a mystic fervour which is perfectly illustrated in the poem:

Si notre vie est moins qu'une journée . . .

He has not Ronsard's sensuality, and, unlike him, he is not a poet of the joy of living and loving. First and foremost he is inspired by melancholy, regrets, and sorrow. He often seems not to feel for the world and for his own life, unless he can find the wound there. When he went to Rome with his uncle, Cardinal Du Bellay, everything he saw disillusioned or irritated him; amid these living people whom he despised, he dreamed of shades. He was in exile, and turned back to his country: the little one, the village, the Angevin Liré:

Heureux qui, comme Ulysse, a fait un beau voyage . . .

and to the whole of France, whom few poets have so nobly and exactly greeted:

France, mère des arts, des armes et des lois . . .

INTRODUCTION

In his soberness and decency, we feel that he is always sincere: hence his laments move us so intimately. He has not the least interest in his attitude. Sometimes, by the movements, the accent, the pure brilliance of the image, and the virtue of incantation, Du Bellay's poems take the shape of complete and perfect works; but no less often, he presents himself to us with the simplest familiarity. He converses in an undertone with Ronsard or Belleau, or with the reader himself, thus showing us his friendliest aspect. Furthermore he could smile and—interrupting for a moment the course of his customary melancholy—play those games, those *Rustic Games*; and sometimes he could become possessed of a light grace, as in the song of the *Vanneur de blé aux Vents*.

If we have dwelt on these two poets in any detail, it is not only because they dominate their era, but also because they represent it, and allow us to evoke it through them. A wonderful period! It seems that then every poet discovered poetry, that it charmed and intoxicated him, and that he could say nothing that was not pure and fresh poetry. Even the lesser poets, the disciples of Ronsard: Jacques Tahureau, who died at the age of twenty-eight; La Péruse, at twenty-five; Jacques Grévin at thirty-two; La Boétie at thirty-three; the graceful and "gently flowing" Rémy Belleau, lover of the *belle cordière*; Olivier de Magny with his playfulness and wit; Amadée Jamyn, Ronsard's page; Vauquelin de la Fresnaye with his charming *Idillies* . . . But for me, it is Baïf who offers, after Ronsard and Du Bellay, the most complex figure—that which most nearly approaches greatness: whether he is tracing the delicate drawings of his *Printemps*, or of the twin nymphs on the bank of the Clain; whether he is adding to the ode a broader and more supple attraction; or whether, in his *Abîmes*, he mixes satire with fable with that simple and natural nobility which was the natural part of good sense, honesty, and indignation, at a time when poetry held such an important place.

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It is extraordinary that such a rich blossoming should not have exhausted the poetic vein of a country. If between Ronsard and

INTRODUCTION

the author of the *Tragiques*, and the author of the *Grandes Odes*, we do not find a poet of equal importance, the interim is by no means desert, and we are able to follow out the double current which, either elaborating an influence, or else by reaction, sprang from the *Pléiade*: on the one hand, D'Aubigné, and the *précieux* or baroque poetry and, on the other hand, Malherbe and the classical doctrine.

Soon Jodelle was seen to be engaged upon the former course—Jodelle, acclaimed by Ronsard, Du Bellay, and Garnier; and who introduced tragedy and comedy into France. But nowadays he is more of a name than a symbol of poetic work. He was also, according to Pasquier, a “supercilious” personage, filled with a great *passion*, which is scarcely that of genius, but which is at times, though graceless and devoid of clarity, ardent, vigorous, and certainly bold. But it mixes up roughness and might, is haughty in its eloquence, always grave in trifles, and therefore thankless. Nevertheless, to see that Jodelle did make some beautiful verse, verse of a hard, strong beauty, it is enough to read the sonnet which Mr. Savill has chosen.

Robert Garnier was also a dramatist, and the lyrical violence, the sparkling flow, the energy and beauty of the images, the steady tone of the lines—all these characteristics make the author of the *Juives* the greatest of our tragedians before Corneille.

Let us admit, on the other hand, that we find ourselves unable to profess any enthusiasm for Du Bartas, whom Goethe esteemed so highly. Not that he did not have his moments of greatness, nor that his ambition, his imagination, and effort are of the common order. But sometimes he is confused and turgid, at others monotonous and neoclassical before his time. We need only compare him with his co-religionist, Agrippa d'Aubigné, to see his innate weakness and limitations.

It is quite the reverse with La Ceppède. Among the poets who have fallen into almost complete oblivion, he is, to my mind, one of the most worthy of admiration. A noble figure, his nobility is reflected in his verses. The two large volumes of his *Théorèmes Spirituels* (they are religious sonnets, commented—or rather justified theologically—by the author) strike us no less by their energy of

INTRODUCTION

expression than by their mystic ardour, often rude and unpolished. They are not sonnets which have been properly finished off down to the last syllable. But they contain movements and images of strange beauty, a firm and natural accent, and above all a very wise sense of the value of symbolism and primitive realism.

And now we come to the greatest poet of this stock, and indeed one of the most glorious names of French poetry: Agrippa d'Aubigné, the protestant, the soldier, the friend of Henry IV (whose conversion filled him with fury)—the poet of the *Tragiques*. In spite of his tedious passages, his exaggerated or redundant masses of confusion, his monotony and his harsh vituperations, Agrippa d'Aubigné bowed to no man. His violent satire has no equal: it is as though he was inflamed by a triple cause—religion, honesty, and fatherland. In depicting the Last Judgement, he succeeded in an undertaking which one might well have thought hopeless. He was the poet of loving, of solitude, and of growing old; and he discovered some of the most amazing accents of our language. His impassioned striving, constant struggles, sudden grace, his shade and light, his stumblings and splendid bearing, his poise, and his pride, make him the unrivalled master of what one might call our baroque school. If the *Tragiques*, conceived in 1577, were not published until 1616, their spirit and force make them belong to the sixteenth century. But whatever parallels we may try to establish, we find in Agrippa d'Aubigné the most independent figure of all our poetry. Need it be added that this great poet is also one of our most delectable prose writers?

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In the face of a line which ends up in the work of such a mighty figure, the one which leads us to Malherbe will no doubt offer us fewer attractions. Nevertheless, Bertaut du Perron and (above all) Desportes, have every right to our attention, and not only because they proclaim more or less timidly the classical period. Amongst Ronsard's successors perhaps none has shown so much facility and diversity as Philippe Desportes, the uncle of Mathurin Régnier. His sonnets and his songs open with great felicity, and are followed by

INTRODUCTION

a subtle movement and a flexible and fluid gracefulness (read, for example, his song *Rozette, pour un peu d'absence* . . .). Without effort, he achieved well-knit poetry of great beauty. A complaisant man, he maintained his freedom while playing the court poet; though a poet of light love, he sang also, with equal ease, of a nobler passion; though a man of the town, he was in no way insensible to nature; though an Epicurean, and of an easy way of life and habits, he was sincere in his repentance and in his fear of death.

Bertaut had neither the grace nor the diversity of Desportes, and Ronsard reproached him for being too cautious. It is very possible that a more passionate inspiration would have made a great poet of him. He already possessed the "instrument." His verse impresses us by its almost classical nobility. He paved the way for Malherbe; even further, he foretold Corneille and even Racine, here and there. His verses and his elegies, mixed often with insipid tedium, show a full, subtle, and vigorous rhetoric of love which was later to echo round the French theatre.

As for Cardinal du Perron, it is enough to say that his *Cantique à la Vierge* (sometimes attributed to Bertaut) is, in its mystic sumptuousness, one of the most beautiful religious poems ever written.

But *enfin Malherbe vint* . . . Malherbe, whom Boileau was to honour as his master and incomparable model; Malherbe the regent, the purifier and poet laureate; Malherbe, whose work and whose influence will remain subjects for scholarly discussions in France.

From one of Ronsard's books, Malherbe had cut out a good half of the lines, when Racan, his pupil, asked him if at least he approved of what was left: "Certainly not," grunted the master, and proceeded to strike out the rest as well. By so doing, he was condemning not only a certain facile abundance, a certain falling off which, in all good faith, one can find in Ronsard, but he was also condemning the inspiration, the natural grace, the pure lyrical eloquence which had refreshed all our poetry. What were we offered in exchange? Reason, logical order, clarity, and the tried purity of the language. We might well feel that we were getting the worst of the bargain.

INTRODUCTION

But let us be fairer. When Malherbe appeared on the scene, Ronsard was no more, nor was Du Bellay. He reacted less against them than against their successors; in other words, he reacted against facility and tolerance devoid of genius, and against the confusion, obscurity and exaggerations which stain even the best poets of the period.

It is easy to smile at Malherbe—at his awkwardness when the misogynist turns gallant, at his vanity when he proclaims his genius, at his heaviness when he pursues the graces, and at his platitudes when he extols his masters. All the same, it is this same Malherbe who stands forth as an exemplary figure of undeniable importance, who imposes on his words the most rigorous laws, who gives a high and virile accent to his verse, who seeks less to please than to dominate, and who, by reason of his fads, obstinacy and discipline, succeeds in secretly disarming us.

Shall we reproach him for his influence? Lasting and strong it certainly was, and perhaps no less harmful than beneficent. However, if Malherbe produced Boileau and Jean-Baptiste Rousseau, he also engendered Racan and Maynard; and he did nothing to hinder Théophile or Saint-Amant—and even extended his favour to Racine.

One might well say that sound common-sense and discipline adapt themselves but ill to poetry. But it would remain to be discovered whether Malherbe's famous undertaking was as reasonable as it is claimed, and as we tell the schoolchildren; if this same reason, in all its rigour and disproportionateness, might not be just the most capricious of fancies; and if, in the end, we might not find in it one of the ways—the most unexpected of all—of poetry. And such a discovery, it seems to me, would be a highly French adventure.

GUILLAUME DE MACHAULT

RONDEAU

BLANCHE com lys, plus que rose vermeille,
Resplendissant com rubis d'Orient,
En remirant vo biaute non pareille,
Blanche com lys, plus que rose vermeille,
Suy si ravis que mes cuers toudis veille
Afin que serve à loy de fin amant,
Blanche com lys, plus que rose vermeille,
Resplendissant com rubis d'Orient.

JEAN FROISSART

BALLADE

Sus toutes flours tient on la rose à belle,
Et, en apres, je croi, la violette.
La flour de lys est belle, et la perselle;
La flour de glay est plaisans et parfette;
Et li plusour aiment moult l'anquelie;
Le pyonier, le muget, la soussie,
Cascune flour a par li sa merite.
Mes je vous di, tant que pour ma partie:
Sus toutes flours j'aimme la Margherite.

GUILLAUME DE MACHAULT

RONDEAU

WHITE as the lily, redder than rose,
Shining with rubies from the East,
Thy matchless beauty I disclose,
White as the lily, redder than rose,
My charmed heart do I dispose
That I as lover serve at least,
White as the lily, redder than rose,
Shining with rubies from the East.

JEAN FROISSART

BALLADE

THEY say the rose above all flowers is fair,
And then the violet, as I believe;
The lily flowering whitely in the air,
And the wild flowers that to the woodland cleave;
Full many love the fragrant columbine,
The marigolds and paeonies that twine:
So they in turn find each one is most sweet.
But as for me, I'll tell you which is mine:
Above all other flowers, I love the Marguerite.

Car en tous temps, plueve, gresille ou gelle,
Soit la saisons ou fresce, ou laide, ou nette,
Ceste flour est gracieuse et nouvelle,
Douce et plaisans, blancete et vermillette;
Close est a point, ouverte et espanie;
Ja n'i sera morte ne apalie.
Toute bonte est dedens li escripte,
Et pour un tant, quant bien g'i estudie:
Sus toutes flours j'aimme la Margherite.

Mes trop grant duel me croist et renouvelle
Quant me souvient de la douce flourette;
Car enclose est dedens une tourelle,
S'a une haie au devant de li fette,
Qui nuit et jour m'empeche et contrarie;
Mes s'Amours voelt estre de mon aye
Ja pour creniel, pour tour ne pour garite
Je ne lairai qu'a occoision ne die:
Sus toutes flours j'aimme la Margherite.

EUSTACHE DESCHAMPS

BALLADE

OR n'est il fleur, odour ne violette,
Arbre, esglantier, tant ait douceur en lui,
Beaute, bonte, ne chose tant parfaite,
Homme, femme, tant soit blanc ne poli,
Crespé ne blond, fort, appert ne joli,
Saige ne foul, que Nature ait formé,
Qui à son temps ne soit viel et usé,

For in all seasons, ice or hail or rain,
Whether the times are bright or dark or fair,
This flower is full of grace and new again
With white and red, and gently nodding there;
It opens wide its little petals gay,
For none will pluck and death is far away.
All kindness deep within this flower is writ,
So though I study now the livelong day,
Above all other flowers, I love the Marguerite.

But by great grief am I now sore beset
Whene'er I think of my sweet little flower:
Imprisoned is it now as in a net
For round they've made a hedge like some great tower,
Which day and night prevents my entrance there.
But did love seek to lead me anywhere,
Nor moated tower nor battlements complete
Could hold me from my song beyond compare:
Above all other flowers, I love the Marguerite.

EUSTACHE DESCHAMPS

BALLADE

THERE is no violet, scent, nor flower so fair,
Briar nor tree that may so lovely be—
No perfect goodness, beauty beyond compare,
Woman nor man (howe'erso white they be
With golden hair, or strong and fine to see),
Nor sage nor fool, so formed by nature wise,
Who in due time doth not forsake his guise,

Et que la mort à sa fin ne le chace,
Et, se viel est, qu'il ne soit diffamé:
Viellence est fin et jeunesse est en grace.

La flour en may et son odour delecte
Aux odorans, non pas jour et demi;
En un moment vient li vens qui la guette;
Cheoir la fait ou la coupe par mi.
Arbres et gens passent leur temps ainsi:
Riens estable n'a Nature ordonné,
Tout doit mourir ce qui a este né;
Un povre aces de fievre l'omme efface,
Ou aage viel, qui est déterminé:
Viellence est fin et jeunesse est en grace.

Pourquoy fait donc dame ne pucellette
Si grant dangier de s'amour a ami,
Qui sechera soubz le pie com l'erbette?
C'est grant folour. Que n'avons nous mercy
L'un de l'autre? Quant tout sera pourry,
Ceuls qui n'aiment et oeuls qui ont amé,
L'y refusant, seront chetif clamé,
Et li donnant aront vermeille face,
Et si seront au monde renommé:
Viellence est fin et jeunesse est en grace.

Prince, chascun doit en son josne aé
Prandre le temps qui lui est destiné.
En l'aage viel tout le contraire face:
Ainsis ara les deux temps en chierté.
Ne face nul de s'amour grant fierté:
Viellence est fin et jeunesse est en grace.

Whom death doth then not unrelenting chase;
And if he's old, do not him then despise:
Age is the end, and youth is full of grace.

The flowers of May with fragrance everywhere
Do give delight, and blossom fragrantly;
Yet sudden through the unsuspecting air
Comes one to fell or cut them cruelly.
Thus men and trees do pass on endlessly:
For nothing firm doth nature e'er comprise,
Since all must fall and die that ever rise;
Swift seizing fever may a man efface,
Or aging years, but equally he dies:
Age is the end, and youth is full of grace.

Why then should lady sweet or maiden fair
Fear danger in true loving willingly,
Since soon as weeds they lie beneath the air?
What folly this! For should we not speak free,
Each to the other? When all is finally
By worms devoured, then shall the lovers' eyes
That never loved, or would not, by harsh cries
Bring scarlet into each too timorous face,
And be ill-famed beneath the whole world's skies:
Age is the end, and youth is full of grace.

So, Prince, in youthful years should each his place
Take up, which Fate foretold with prescience wise;
For in old age man sees the other face,
And fruitfully the passing years he tries,
Nor foolish pride of love e'er clouds his eyes:
Age is the end, and youth is full of grace.

CHRISTINE DE PISAN

RONDEAU

RIANS vairs yeulx, qui mon cuer avez pris
Par vos regars pleins de laz amoureux,
A vous me rens, si me tiens eureux
D'estre par vous si doucement surpris.
On ne pourroit sommer le tres grant pris
De vos grans biens qui tant sont savoureux.
Rians vairs yeulx, qui mon cuer avez pris.
Tant estes doulz, plaisant et bien apris,
Qu'au monde n'a homme si doulereux
Que, s'un regart en avoit doulcereux,
Que tantost n'eust par vous confort repris,
Rians vairs yeulx, qui mon cuer avez pris.

CHARLES D'ORLEANS

BALLADE

EN regardant vers le pais de France,
Ung jour m'avint, à Dovre sur la mer,
Qu'il me souvint de la doulce plaisance
Que souloye oudit pais trouver.
Si commençay de cuer à souspirer,
Combien certes que grant bien me faisoit
De veoir France, que mon cuer amer doit.

CHRISTINE DE PISAN

RONDEAU

LAUGHING green eyes, you have won all my heart
By those glances so pregnant with amorous sighs;
Full happy am I to surrender to eyes
Which so gently have wooed that I'll nevermore part.
I could not add up all the price of my heart
Which your riches have conquered with gentle surprise;
Laughing green eyes, you have won all my heart.
So gentle you are and such loving looks dart,
That no man on earth (though he fears that he dies),
Would not (seeing thy gentle and kind looking eyes)
All at once lose his pain, and to live again start:
Laughing green eyes, you have won all my heart!

CHARLES D'ORLEANS

BALLADE

LOOKING one day toward the coast of France,
As I stood then at Dover by the sea,
The pleasant memory I had by chance
Of pleasant days that I did one time see.
Then from my heart I sighed full dolefully,
And poignant joy did fill my heart that day
To see my France that I shall love alway.

Je m'avisay que c'estoit non sçavance
De telz souspirs dedens mon cueur garder,
Veu que je voy que la voye commence
De bonne paix, qui tous biens peut donner.
Pour ce, tournay en confort mon penser:
Mais non pourtant mon cueur ne se lassoit
De veoir France, que mon cueur amer doit.

Alors chargeay en la nef d'Esperance
Tous mes souhaitz en les priant d'aler
Oultre la mer, sans faire demourance,
Et à France de me recommander,
Où nous doint Dieu bonne paix sans tarder!
Adonc auray loisir, mais qu'ainsi soit,
De veoir France, que mon cueur amer doit.

Paix est tresor qu'on ne peut trop louer,
Je hé guerre, point ne la doy priser;
Destourbé m'a longtemps, soit tort ou droit,
De veoir France, que mon cueur amer doit.

CHARLES D'ORLEANS

LE PRINTEMPS

Le temps a laissé son manteau
De vent, de froidure et de pluye,
Et s'est vestu de broderye,
De soleil raiant, clèr et beau.

Such sighs, methought, did not my lot enhance,
To grieve within my heart thus mournfully;
Since the broad way (I saw at earliest glance)
Led soon to peace, where all good things would be.
So to my thoughts I turned more tranquilly;
But ever did my heart return that day
To see my France that I shall love alway.

Then on the ship of Hope I set my glance,
And bid my longings make good speed for me,
And hie them o'er the sea to fairest France
There to convey my greetings faithfully.
God grant us peace forthwith by land and sea!
Then shall I leisure have by night and day
To see my France that I shall love alway.

Peace is a treasure far beyond any fee,
War I detest, it hath no joy for me:
For, right or wrong, I've grieved full many a day
To see my France that I shall love alway.

CHARLES D'ORLEANS

SPRING

TIME has lost her wintry gear
Of wind, and cold, and rain,
And is attired again
In radiant sunlight, bright and clear.

Il n'y a beste ne oiseau
Qu'en son jargon ne chante ou crye:
Le temps a laissié son manteau
De vent, de froidure et de pluye.

Rivière, fontaine et ruisseau
Portent, en livree jolye,
Goultes d'argent d'orfaverie,
Chascun s'habille de nouveau.
Le temps a laissié son manteau.

CHARLES D'ORLEANS

L'ETE

LES fourriers d'este sont venuz
Pour appareiller son logis
Et ont fait tendre ses tappis
De fleurs et verdure tissuz.
En estandant tappis veluz
De vert herbe par le païs,
Les fourriers d'este sont venuz
Pour appareiller son logis.

Cueurs d'ennuy piéça morfonduz,
Dieu mercy, sont sains et jolis;
Alez-vous en, prenez païs,
Yver, vous ne demourez plus,
Les fourriers d'este sont venuz.

All birds and beasts, both far and near,
Do sing and shout amain:
Time has lost her wintry gear
Of wind, and cold, and rain.

Rivers, fountains, streams appear
In all their raiment gay,
And sparkle on their way,
And silverly shine forth again:
Time has lost her wintry gear
Of wind, and cold, and rain.

CHARLES D'ORLEANS

SUMMER

SUMMER's harbingers are here
To build their homes again,
And, brought in their fair train,
The green and flowered lawns appear;
So spreading through the country clear
With greenest grass amain,
Summer's harbingers are here
To build their homes again.

Hearts that once were frozen here,
God be praised, are gay.
Harsh winter flee away,
No more to linger here with pain!
Summer's harbingers are here
To build their homes again.

BALLADE SUR LA PAIX

PRIEZ pour paix, doulce vierge Marie,
 Royne des cieulx et du monde maistresse:
 Faictes prier, par vostre courtoisie,
 Saints et saintes, et prenez vostre adresse
 Vers vostre filz, requerant sa haultesse
 Qu'il lui plaise son peuple regarder
 Que de son sang a voulu racheter,
 En desboutant guerre qui tout desvoye.
 De priez ne vous veuilliez lasser:
 Priez pour paix, le vray tresor de joye.

Priez, prelatz et gens de sainte vie,
 Religieux, ne dormez en peresse;
 Priez, maistres et tous suivans clergie,
 Car par guerre fault que l'estude cesse.
 Moustiers destruis sont, sans qu'on les redresse,
 Le service de Dieu vous fault laisser
 Quant ne povez en repos demourer.
 Priez si fort que briefment Dieu vous oye;
 L'Eglise vult à ce vous ordonner:
 Priez pour paix, le vray tresor de joye.

Priez, princes qui avez seigneurie,
 Rois, ducs, contes, barons plains de noblesse,
 Gentilz-hommes avec chevalerie;
 Car meschans gens surmontent Gentillesse,
 En leurs mains ont toute vostre richesse.
 Debatz les font en hault estat monter;
 Vous le povez chascun jour veoir au cler,
 Et sont riches de voz biens et monnoye,
 Dont vous deussies le peuple supporter.
 Priez pour paix, le vray tresor de joye.

BALLADE ON PEACE

PRAY for peace, sweet Virgin Mary Blessed,
Mistress of the world and Heaven's queen,
And have them pray, at thy most mild request,
The holy Saints, and then with pious mien
Address thy Son's pure Majesty serene,
That He may please His people here to see,
Whom He redeemed with blood immortally,
And outlawed war, which all things doth destroy.
Let not thy prayers bring weariness to thee:
Pray for peace, true treasure full of joy.

Pray, prelates, priests, of all men holiest,
Sleeping in idleness now be not seen;
Masters, clerics, pray at my behest,
For needs must study cease where war has been;
The ruined monasteries are all stripped clean,
Ye cannot now serve God in piety,
Nor afterwards in rest dwell tranquilly.
Pray unto God that He may war destroy,
So doth the Church ordain, that ye be free:
Pray for peace, true treasure full of joy.

Pray, princes all, who seigniory invest,
Kings, dukes, and earls, in all your powers seen,
And gentle knights of chivalry the best:
For evil men have tarnished your fair sheen,
And in their hands do all your riches glean.
They mount on high in strife grown mightily;
From day to day they strut full clear to see.
Fat with your moneys, all things they destroy;
Your wealth is gone that should your peoples free:
Pray for peace, true treasure full of joy.

Priez, peuple qui souffrez tyrannie:
Car vos seigneurs sont en telle foiblesse .
Qu'ilz ne pevent vous garder par mestrie,
Ne vous aidier en vostre grant destresse.
Loyaulx marchans la telle si vous blesse,
Fort sur le dos chacun vous vient presser
Et ne povez marchandise mener:
Car vous n'avez seur passage ne voye
Et maint peril vous convient-il passer.
Priez pour paix, le vray tresor de joye.

Priez, galans, joyeux en compaignie,
Qui despendre desirez à largesse;
Guerre vous tient la bourse desgarnie.
Priez, amans qui voulez en liesse
Servir amours; car guerre par rudesse
Vous destourbe de voz dames hanter,
Qui maintes foiz fait leurs vouloirs tourner:
Et quant tenez le bout de la courroye
Ung estrangier si le vous vient oster.
Priez pour paix, le vray tresor de joye.

Dieu tout puissant nous vueille conforter
Toutes choses en terre, ciel et mer!
Priez vers lui que brief en tout pourvoye,
En lui seul est de tous maux amender:
Priez pour paix, le vray tresor de joye.

Pray, people all by tyranny oppressed:
Your overlords are grown so weak, I ween,
That they avail you naught though sore distressed,
Nor can protect you now by any mean.
Ye loyal merchants, saddled have ye been,
And on your backs the burden grievously
Weighs down, that ye no more may merchants be;
For every way foes cruelly destroy,
And many a peril ye must now foresee:
Pray for peace, true treasure full of joy.

Pray, gallants all, in fellowship well blessed,
Who freely spend that sorrow be not seen;
Now warfare hath your purses all impressed.
Pray, lovers, who yourselves do gaily preen
To serve your loves; for mailed war hath been
Hurled in your midst, that dalliance may not be,
Nor at this while your ladies ye may see;
So when your happiness they would destroy,
Your love by strangers stol'n usurpingly;
Pray for peace, true treasure full of joy.

Almighty God I pray our comfort be
For all things here on earth, on land and sea!
Pray to Him that evil He destroy,
For He alone can make us good and free:
Pray for peace, true treasure full of joy.

A SON NEZ

BEAU nez, dont les rubis ont cousté mainte pippe
 De vin blanc et claiRET,
 Et duquel la couleur richement participe
 Du rouge et violet;

Gros nez! qui te regarde à travers un grant verre
 Te juge encor plus beau:
 Tu ne ressembles point au nez de quelque herre
 Qui ne beoit que de l'eau.

Un coq d'Inde sa gorge à toy semblable porte:
 Combien de riches gens
 N'ont pas si riche nez! Pour le peindre en la sorte
 Il faut beaucoup de temps.

Le verre est le pinceau duquel on t'enlumine;
 Le vin est la couleur
 Dont on t'a peint ainsy plus rouge qu'une guigne,
 En beuvant du meilleur.

On dit qu'il nuit aux yeux, mais seront-ils les maitres?
 Le vin est guarison
 De mes maux; j'ame mieux perdre les deux fenestres
 Que toute la maison.

OLIVIER BASSELIN

TO HIS NOSE

FAIR nose, full many a barrel have I paid
Of ruddy wine and white,
And carefully thy rich hue I have made
Of red and violet light;

Huge nose! Whoever sees thee through a glass
Must find thee fairer yet:
Since never for a pale nose thou couldst pass
That drank but water wet.

The Indian cock, his neck is just like thee:
And all the richest men
Have not so rich a nose! As rich to be
Would need more years than ten.

A wineglass is the brush to paint thy hue;
The colour of good wine
Which made thee ruddier than cherry true
By drinking liquor fine.

They say it hurts the eyes. Why should I care?
My cure is all in wine:
I'd sooner lose of window-frames a pair
Than all the mansion fine.

ÉLOGE DE NOÉ

QUE Noé fut un patriarche digne!
Car ce fut luy qui nous planta la vigne
Et beust premier le jus de son raisin.
O le bon vin!

Mais tu estois, Lycurgue, mal habile,
Qui ne voulus qu'on beust vin en ta ville;
Les beuveurs d'eau ne font point bonne fin.
O le bon vin!

Qui boit bon vin, il fait bien sa besongne.
On voit souvent vieillir un bon ivrongne,
Et mourir jeune un savant medecin.
O le bon vin!

Le vin n'est point de ces mauvais beuvraiges
Qui, beus par trop, font faillir les couraiges:
J'ai, quand j'en bois, le couraige herculin.
O le bon vin!

Puisque Noé, un si grand personnage,
De boire bien nous a appris l'usage,
Je boirai tout. Fay comme moi, voisin!
O le bon vin!

OLIVIER BASSELIN

IN PRAISE OF NOAH

OLD Noah was a patriarch great and fine!
For he it was who planted our first vine,
And first did drink the juice of raisin wine.

Ho! for good wine!

But you, Lycurgus, with a churlish frown,
Forbade they should drink wine within your town;
And water drinkers ever must repine.

Ho! for good wine!

Who drinks good wine, right well his work is done;
A drunken sot lives long as anyone,
While a wise doctor dies still young and fine—

Ho! for good wine!

Wine is no drink which never will avail
When drunk too much, nor make your courage fail:
When I have drunk, my valour's Herculine.

Ho! for good wine!

Since Noah, such a mighty personage,
Taught us to drink, a noble privilege,
I shall drink all. Do likewise, neighbour mine!

Ho! for good wine!

AUTEUR INCONNU

COMPLAINTE POPULAIRE

“GENTILZ gallans de France,
Qui en la guerre allez,
Je vous prie qu’il vous plaise
Mon amy saluer.”

“Comment le saluroye
Quant point ne le congnois?”
“Il est bon à congnoistre,
Il est de blanc armé;”

“Il porte la croix blanche,
Les esperons dorez,
Et au bout de sa lance
Ung fer d’argent doré.”

“Ne plorez plus, la belle,
Car il est trespasé:
Il est mort en Bretagne,
Les Bretons l’ont tué.

“J’ay veu faire sa fousse
L’oree d’ung vert pre,
Et veu chanter sa messe
A quatre cordelliers.”

ANONYMOUS

POPULAR LAMENT

"YE gentle knights of France,
Who march to war away,
To my own dearest friend
My greetings say."

"How shall we greet him then,
Since him we do not know?"
"He is not hard to tell—
From head to toe

"In armour white; he bears
A cross: his spurs gold-tint;
His lance-tip, pointed fine,
Gilt-silver glint."

"Fair lady, weep no more,
For he hath gone his way;
He died in Brittany,
Struck down one day.

"I saw them dig his grave
Beside a grassy verge;
Four friars prayed for him,
And sang his dirge."

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE DES DAMES DU TEMPS JADIS

DICTES-MOY où, n'en quel pays,
Est Flora, la belle Romaine?
Archipiade, ne Thais,
Qui fut sa cousine germaine?
Echo, parlant quand bruyt on malne
Dessus riviére ou sus estan,
Qui beaulte eut trop plus qu'humaine? . . .
Mais où sont les neiges d'antan!

Où est la tres-sage Heloïs,
Pour qui fut chastré et puis moyne
Pierre Esbaillart, à Sainct-Denys?
Pour son amour eut cest essoyne.
Semblablement, où est la Royne
Qui commanda que Buridan
Fust jetté en ung sac en Seine? . . .
Mais où sont les neiges d'antan!

La royne Blanche comme ung lys,
Qui chantoit à voix de seraine,
Berthe au grand pied, Beatrix, Allys,
Haremburges, qui tint le Mayne,
Et Jehanne, la bonne Lorraine,
Qu'Anglois bruslerent à Rouen:
Où sont-ilz, Vierge souveraine? . . .
Mais où sont les neiges d'antan!

Prince, n'enquerez, de sepmaine,
Où elles sont, ne de cest an,
Car ce refrain le vous remaine:
Mais où sont les neiges d'antan!

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE OF THE LADIES OF BYGONE DAYS

TELL me where she now doth fare,
Flora, the courtesan of Rome?
Archippa, too, and Thais, where,
Who was her cousin ages gone?
And Echo, murmuring by the stream
In woodland pool or rushing weir,
Whose beauty shone with deathless gleam . . .
Where are the snows of yester-year?

Where is wisest Héloïse,
For whom her unmanned lover prayed
In monkish cell at Saint-Denis
(For such the price for love he paid)?
Where is the Queen who was so fain
To bid that Buridan the seer
Be drowned within the river Seine . . .
Where are the snows of yester-year?

Queen Blanche, fairer than lily white,
Who knew to sing the sirens' song,
Alice, and Beatrice, heart's delight,
And Bertha, with feet broad and long,
And Joan, the Maiden of Lorraine,
By English burnt with pagan fear—
Where are they, Virgin Sovereign?
Where are the snows of yester-year?

Seek not, Prince, week in week out,
To know why they're no longer here,
For this refrain shall quit your doubt:
Where are the snows of yester-year?

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE DES SEIGNEURS DU TEMPS JADIS

Quoi plus! Où est le tiers Calixte,
Dernier decedé de ce nom,
Qui quatre ans tint le Papaliste?
Alphonse, le roy d'Aragon,
Le gracieux duc de Bourbon,
Et Artus, le duc de Bretagne,
Et Charles septiesme, le Bon? . . .
Mais où est le preux Charlemaigne!

Semblablement, le roy Scotiste,
Qui demy-face eut, ce dit-on,
Vermeille comme une amathiste
Depuis le front jusqu'au menton?
Le Roy de Chypre, de renom,
Helas! et le bon roy d'Espagne,
Duquel je ne sçais pas le nom? . . .
Mais où est le preux Charlemaigne!

D'en plus parler je me désiste:
Ce n'est que toute abusion.
Il n'est qui contre mort résiste,
Ne qui treuve provision.
Encor fais une question:
Lancelot, le roy de Behaigne,
Où est-il? Où est son tayan? . . .
Mais où est le preux Charlemaigne!

Envoi

Où est Claquin, le bon Breton?
Où le comte Dauphin d'Auvergne,
Et le bon feu duc d'Alençon? . . .
Mais où est le preux Charlemaigne!

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE OF THE LORDS OF BYGONE DAYS

NAY more! Where's now the third Calixte,
Last of this name to pass away,
Who four years reigned as Papalist?
Where's Aragon's Alfonso, say!
And Bourbon's Duke, where's he today?
And Arthur, Duke of fair Bretagne,
And Charles the Good who once held sway? . . .
Where is the knightly Charlemagne!

And the Scots King we long have missed,
Half of whose face did glow, they say,
Redder than any amethyst
From brow to chin both night and day?
The King of Cyprus, passed away,
And the good sovereign of Spain,
Whose name I mind me not today? . . .
Where is the knightly Charlemagne!

From naming more must I desist:
'Twould be abuse with kings to play.
None may e'er dread Death resist,
'Gainst him no strength is there I say,
But one more thing I ask today—
Lancelot, King of proud Bretagne,
Where is he gone, where holds he sway? . . .
Where is the knightly Charlemagne!

Envoi

Where is Brittany's prince today,
Where the Count Dauphin of Auvergne,
Lord Alençon, new passed away? . . .
Where is the knightly Charlemagne!

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE POUR PRIER NOSTRE-DAME

DAME du ciel, regente terrienne,
Emperiere des infernaulx paluz,
Recevez-moy vostre humble chrestienne:
Que comprinse soye entre vos esleuz,
Ce non obstant qu'oncques rien ne valuz.
Les biens de vous, ma dame et ma maistresse,
Sont trop plus grans que ne suis pecheresse,
Sans lesquelz biens ame ne peult merir
N'avoir les cieulx. Je n'en suis menteresse:
En ceste foy je vueil vivre et mourir.

A vostre filz dictes que je suis sienne:
De luy soyent mes pechez absoluz.
Pardonnez-moi, comme à l'Egyptienne,
Où comme il feit au cler Theophilus,
Lequel par vous fut quitte et absoluz,
Combien qu'il eust au diable faict promesse.
Preservez-moy que je n'accomplisse ce!
Vierge, portant, sans rompure encourir,
Le sacrement qu'on célèbre à la messe . . .
En ceste foy je vueil vivre et mourir.

Femme je suis povrette et ancienne,
Qui riens ne sçay, oncques lettre ne leuz:
Au moustier voy dont suid parroissienne,
Paradis painct, où sont harpes et luz,
Et ung enfer où damnez sont boulluz:
L'ung me faict paour, l'autre joye et liesse.
La joye avoir faid-moy, haulte Deesse,
A qui pecheurs doivent tous recourir,
Comblez de foy, sans faincte ne paresse . . .
En ceste foy je vueil vivre et mourir.

BALLADE TO OUR LADY

LADY of Heaven, and Regent of the Earth,
Empress of the broad infernal plain!
Hearken a Christian woman of low worth:
Receive me in thy holiest domain,
For elsewhere there is only grief and pain.
More riches spring from thee, my Lady fair,
Than I with all my sins might ever bear
To contemplate; more good things in the Sky
Than I could win. I lie not in despair:
In this Faith would I ever live and die.

Tell Him I'm thine, to Whom thou gavest birth:
Through Him have I lost every sinful stain.
As once the Egyptian maid, forgive my worth
So slight;—or else, Theophilus, again,
Whom thou to favour gently didst regain,
Though he was vowed to Satan's evil care.
Preserve me that I too may not fall there!
Oh Virgin! Thou with virtue, held on high,
Dost to the Mass the Holy Sacrament bear:
In this Faith would I ever live and die.

I am a woman old, and of the earth;
I nothing know, nor e'er read letters plain:
Within my parish church I saw the Birth,
Paradise, too, of harps and lutes a train,
The damned of Hell were boiling there amain.
This gave me fear, that gave me joyful care:
Help me to joy, oh mighty Goddess fair,
To whom all sinners penitently fly!
Fill me with faith, and hearken to my prayer:
In this Faith would I ever live and die.

Vous portastes, Vierge, digne princesse,
Jesus regnant, qui n'a ne fin ne cesse.
Le Tout-Puissant, prenant nostre foiblesse
Laissa les cieulx et nous vint secourir,
Offrist à mort sa tres-chere jeunesse.
Nostre Seigneur est tel, je le confesse . . .
En ceste foy je vueil vivre et mourir.

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE DES FEMMES DE PARIS

Quoy qu'on tient belles langagieres
Florentines, Veniciennes,
Assez pour estre messaigieres,
Et mesmement les anciennes;
Mais, soient Lombardes, Rommaines,
Genevoyses, à mes perilz,
Piemontoises, Savoysiennes,
Il n'est bon bec que de Paris.

De beau parler tiennent chayeres,
Ce dit-on, Neapolitaines,
Et que sont bonnes caquetieres
Allemandes et Prussiennes;
Soient Grecques, Egyptiennes,
De Hongrie ou d'autre pays,
Espaignolles ou Castellennes,
Il n'est bon bec que de Paris.

Oh Princess! In thy womb thou once didst bear
Jesus the King, who is immortal there:
The Almighty God, who bore our weakest care,
Who came to aid us from the eternal Sky,
And gave to death His dear youth as a prayer.
Such is our Lord, to tell this truth I dare:
In this Faith would I ever live and die.

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE OF THE WOMEN OF PARIS

IN Florence, and in Venice, too,
The women's tongues wag merrily,
That they might well be messengers
(The old ones, too, as you shall see);
But though they come from Lombardy,
Or Genoa or mighty Rome,
Piedmont or Savoy—best of all,
The Paris tongue is the tongue for me.

The dames of Naples, I've been told,
Prattle and prate full zealously;
And many a cackling you may hear
In Prussia and in Germany;
But though they come from Hungary,
Egypt or Greece, or other lands,
From haughty Spain or proud Castille—
The Paris tongue is the tongue for me.

Brettes, Suysies, n'y savent gueres,
Ne Gasconnes et Thoulouzaines;
Du Petit-Pont deux harangeres
Les concluront, et les Lorraines,
Angloises ou Calaisiennes
(Ay-je beaucoup de lieux compris?),
Picardes, de Valenciennes . . .
Il n'est bon bec que de Paris.

Prince, aux dames Parisiennes,
De bien parler donnez le prix.
Quoy qu'on die d'Italiennes,
Il n'est bon bec que de Paris.

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE DE BONNE DOCTRINE

CAR or' soyes porteur de bulles,
Pipeur ou hazardeur de dez,
Tailleur de faulx coings, tu te brusles,
Comme ceux qui sont eschaudez;
Traistres pervers, de foy vuydez,
Soyez larron, ravis ou pillés:
Où en va l'acquest, que cuydez?
Tout aux tavernes et aux filles.

The Bretonnes or the Swiss, or those
From Toulouse or from Gascony,
Are routed quick by gossips twain
From Paris—Lorrainers equally,
From England, Calais, none can be
(Have I named foreign towns enough?)
From Valence or from Picardy—
The Paris tongue is the tongue for me.

Prince, to all Paris gossips give
The prize for words, though Italy
Should claim her share, for I declare
The Paris tongue is the tongue for me.

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE OF GOOD DOCTRINE

Now whether you are a pardoner,
Or cheat at dice ingeniously,
Or mint false money, rest assured
You'll burn for it infallibly!
Perverted traitors, void of faith,
Rogues and robbers all your days!
Where goes your profit? Tell me that!
On women and wine and riotous ways

Ryme, raille, cymballe, luttés,
Comme folz, faintis, eshontez,
Farce, broille, joue des flustes;
Fais, ès villes et ès citez,
Fainctes, jeux et moralitéz;
Gaigne au berlan, au glic, aux quilles:
Où s'en va tout? Or escoutez:
Tout aux tavernes et aux filles.

De telz ordures te reculles;
Laboure, fauche champs et prez;
Sers et panse chevaux et mulles,
S'aucunement tu n'es lettrez;
Assez auras, se prens en grez.
Mais, se chanvre broyes ou tilles,
Où tendront labours qu'as ouvrez?
Tout aux tavernes et aux filles.

Chausses, pourpoinctz esguilletez,
Robes, et toutes vos drapilles,
Ains que soient usez, vous portez
Tout aux tavernes et aux filles.

With rhyming strife and cymbal clash
Like frenzied actors shamelessly,
In many a broil and comedy
In town and city, endlessly
You play the old moralities,
And gamble at cards and win much praise.
But where goes your profit? Hark to me:
On women and wine and riotous ways.

Leave all this sullied living now,
And toil in meadows fruitfully;
Care for horses and treat your mules.
Even if you're not scholarly
You'll learn enough, so be of cheer.
But if you squander all your days,
Where will the hard-won profits go?
On women and wine and riotous ways.

All your doublets fine, and hose,
And elegant garments trimmed with lace
Are worn but once, then everything goes
On women and wine and riotous ways.

EPISTRE EN FORME DE BALLADE, À SES AMIS

Ayez pitie, ayez pitie de moy,
 A tout le moins, si vous plaist, mes amis!
 En fosse giz, non pas soubz houx ne may,
 En cest exil ouquel je suis transmis
 Par fortune, comme Dieu l'a permis.
 Filles, amans, jeunes, vieulx et nouveaux;
 Danceurs, sauteurs, faisans les piez de veaux,
 Vifs comme dars, agus comme aguillon;
 Gousiers tintans, clers comme gastaveaux:
 Le lesserez là, le povre Villon?

Chantres chantans à plaisance, sans loy;
 Galans, rians, plaisans en faictz et diz;
 Coureux, allans, francs de faulx or, d'aloï;
 Gens d'esperit, ung petit estourdiz:
 Trop demourez, car il meurt entandiz.
 Faiseurs de laiz, de motets et rondeaux,
 Quand mort sera, vous luy ferez chandeaux.
 Il n'entre, ou gist, n'escler ne tourbillon;
 De murs espois on luy a fait bandeaux:
 Le lesserez là, le povre Villon?

Venez le veoir en ce piteux arroy,
 Nobles hommes, francs de quarz et de dix,
 Qui ne tenez d'empereur ne de roy,
 Mais seulement de Dieu de Paradiz:
 Jeuner luy fault dimanches et mardiz,
 Dont les dens a plus longues que ratteaux;
 Apres pain sec, non pas apres gasteaux,
 En ses boyaulx verse eau à gros bouillon;
 Bas enterre, table n'a, ne tretteaux:
 Le lesserez là, le povre Villon?

EPISTOLARY BALLADE TO HIS FRIENDS

OH pity me, my friends and comrades all,
 Be pleased to grant sweet pity now to me!
 Here in a ditch I lie; I have no pall
 Of holly-tree or may, but nakedly
 In exile lie as God has willed to be.
 Girls and lovers, young and old and new;
 Dancers with many a merry measure true,
 Sharper than goads, like darts each flashing eye;
 Full-throated drinkers, joyous of tone and hue:
 Will you leave poor François Villon here to die?

You chanting priests, who bow to 'no man's call,
 Joying in words and deeds so pleasantly;
 You spendthrift rakes with money true or false,
 And men of spirit, hear my piteous plea!
 You turn too late, I'm wounded mortally.
 Makers of lays and songs and rondeaux true,
 When I am dead and hymned in mournful tune,
 I'll fear not lightning breaking from the sky:
 Immured deep, I'll see no more the blue . . .
 Will you leave poor François Villon here to die?

Come, see him, and your pity now appal,
 You noble men who pay nor tithe nor fee,
 Nor to an earthly king are ever thrall,
 Serving but God and Heaven piously!
 For every day is fast day now for me,
 Who longer than any rat have hungry tooth,
 Longing for crusts of bread—no cakes forsooth;
 Whose bowels of watered soup are long since dry.
 Here is no festive board, in sorry truth!
 Will you leave poor François Villon here to die?

Princes nommez, anciens, jouvenceaux,
Empetrez-moy graces et royaulx sceaux,
Et me montez en quelque corbillon.
Ainsi le font l'un à l'autre pourceaux,
Car, où l'un brait, ilz fuyent à monceaux.
Le lesserez là, le povre Villon?

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE DES PENDUS

FRERES humains, qui apres nous vivez,
N'ayez les cueurs contre nous endurcis,
Car, se pitie de nous povres avez,
Dieu en aura plus tost de vous merciz.
Vous nous voyez cy attachez cinq, six.
Quant de la chair, que trop avons nourrie,
Elle est pieça devoree et pourrie,
Et nous, les os, devenons cendre et pouldre.
De nostre mal personne ne s'en rie,
Mais priez Dieu que tous nous vueille absouldre.

Se vous clamons, freres, pas n'en devez
Avoir desdaing, quoyque fusmes occis
Par justice. Toutesfois, vous sçavez
Que tous les hommes n'ont pas bon sens assis;
Intercedez doncques, de cueur rassis,
Envers le Filz de la Vierge Marie,
Que sa grace ne soit pour nous tarie,
Nous preservant de l'infernale fouldre.
Nous sommes morts, ame ne nous harie;
Mais priez Dieu que tous nous vueille absouldre.

Renowned Princes, youths and aged men:
Beseech for me a royal pardon; then
In some large basket lift me up on high.
For now you are as swine that, when I cry,
Do run away, nor ever come again . . .
Will you leave poor François Villon here to die?

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE OF THE HANGED MEN

OH living men, who after us dwell here,
Harden not your hearts in bitterness:
For if you pity us with righteous fear,
God will the sooner grant you recompense.
Here do you see us hang—some six or less:
As for the flesh, which once we nourished well,
Long since was it picked clean by night and day,
And we, poor bones, a putrid story tell.
Let no one mock our woe with laughter gay:
But pray to God to wash all sins away.

If we call out to you, our brethren dear,
You must not think of us with scornfulness,
Though justice hanged us. You should know full clear
That sometimes men do little sense possess;
Beseech you, then, with pious hearts to bless
The Virgin Mary and her Son, and tell
How we do beg her holy grace, and pray
She save us from the burning fires of Hell.
For we are dead, and fear no earthly pain:
But pray to God to wash all sins away.

La pluye nous a debuez et lavez,
Et le soleil dessechez et noircis;
Pies, corbeaulx, nous ont les yeux cavez,
Et arrachez la barbe et les sourcilz.
Jamais, nul temps, nous ne sommes assis;
Puis ça, puis là, comme le vent varie,
A son plaisir, sans cesser, nous charie,
Plus becquetez d'oyseaulx que dez à couldre.
Ne soyez donc de nostre confrairie,
Mais priez Dieu que tous nous vueille absouldre.

Prince Jesus, qui sur tous seigneurie,
Garde qu'Enfer n'ayt de nous la maistrie:
A luy n'ayons que faire ne que souldre.
Hommes, icy, n'usez de mocquerie,
Mais priez Dieu que tous nous vueillez absouldre.

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE DE L'APPEL DE VILLON

QUE dictes-vous de mon Appel,
Garnier? Feis-je sens ou follie?
Toute beste garde sa pel:
Qui la contrainct, efforce où lie,
S'elle peult, elle se deslie.
Quand à ceste paine arbitraire
Chante me fut ceste homelie,
Estoit-il lors temps de me taire?

The rain has beaten down and washed us here;
The sun has dried us black with fieriness;
Magpies and crows have pecked at eye and ear,
Torn at our beards and brows with ruthlessness.
We have had no time for rest and quietness,
Tossed here and there to ring our own sad knell,
At all the whims of the wind, the livelong day;
More pocked by birds than any thimble-shell.
Be not of our fraternity, I say:
But pray to God to wash all sins away.

Prince Jesus, Who art Lord of all men here,
Preserve us from the burning pit of Hell,
And keep us from its cruel, scorching sear.
So mock not, mortals; mind you mark it well:
And pray to God to wash all sins away.

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE OF VILLON'S APPEAL

TELL me, Garnier, what do you think
Of my appeal? Or am I daft?
Every beast hangs on to his skin:
But whether they lash him fore and aft,
He gets out quicker than they put him in.
And as for their pompous, prating words,
They gave me a sermon as long as your arm;
Must I be silent? What's the harm?

Se fusse des hoirs Hue Capel,
Qui fut extraict de boucherie,
On ne m'eust, parmy ce drapel,
Faict boyre à ceste escorcherie.
Vous entendez bien joncherie.
Ce fut son plaisir volontaire
De me juger par tricherie.
Estoit-il lors temps de me taire?

Cuydez-vous que soubz mon cappel
N'y eust tant de philosophie,
Comme de tire: "J'en appel?"
Si avoit, je vous certifie,
Combien que point trop ne m'y fie.
Quand on me dit, present notaire:
"Pendu serez!" je vous affie,
Estoit-il lors temps de me taire?

Prince, si j'eusse eu la pepie,
Pieça je fusse où est Clotaire,
Aux champs debout, comme ung espie.
Estoit-il lors temps de me taire?

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE

EN reagal, en arsenic rocher,
En orpiment, en salpestre et chaulx vive;
En plomb boillant, pour mieulx les esmorcher;
En suif et poix, destrampez de lessive
Faicte d'estrons et de pissat de Juifve;

Were I a son of old King Hugh,
A butcher's brat—or so they say—
They wouldn't have torn me on the rack
And flayed me alive in that bestial way!
Do you know what it's like with no skin to your back?
It was just their lordships' lordly fun:
They found out I cheated—just guess the alarm!
Must I be silent? What's the harm?

Do you think that under this thatch of mine
I haven't got wits enough to see
That the only thing left was to say "I appeal"?
And though I have wits—and you ought to know me—
They're of little avail to me now, I feel.
When the Clerk of the Court said, in unctuous tones,
"You must hang by the neck!" would you have kept calm?
Must I be silent? What's the harm?

I tell you, Sirrah, had I kept dumb,
I'd have hung like a scarecrow on any farm,
And long since have visited Kingdom Come—
Must I be silent? What's the harm?

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE

IN yellow orpiment, realgar red,
In arsenic stone, saltpetre, or in lime;
In boiling lead to flay them better then;
In tallow, pitch, or steeped in acrid lye,
With ordure and with urine intermixed;

En lavaille de jambes à messeaulx;
En raclure de piedz et vieulx houseaulx;
En sang d'aspic et drogues venimeuses,
En fiels de loups, de regnards et blereaux,
Soient frites ces langues envieuses!

En cervelle de chat qui hayt pescher,
Noir, et si vieil qu'il n'ait dent en gencive;
D'ung vieil mastin, qui vault bien aussi cher,
Tout enragé, en sa bave et salive;
En l'escume d'une mulle poussive,
Detrenchee menu à bons ciseaulx;
En eau où ratz plongent groings et museaulx,
Raines, crapauds et bestes dangereuses,
Serpens, lezards et telz nobles oyseaulx,
Soient frites ces langues envieuses!

En sublime, dangereux à toucher,
Et au nombril d'une couleuvre vive;
En sang qu'on veoit es pallectes secher,
Chez ces barbiers, quand plaine lune arrive,
Dont l'ung est noir, l'autre plus vert que cive;
En chancre et ficz, et en ces ords cuveaulx
Où nourrices essangent leurs drappeaulx;
En petits baings de filles amoureuses
(Qui ne m'entend n'a suivy les bordeaulx),
Soient frites ces langues envieuses!

Prince, passez tous ces friands morceaulx,
S'estamine n'avez, sacs ou bluteaux,
Parmy le fons d'unes brayes breneuses,
Mais, paravant, en estrons de pourceaulx,
Soient frites ces langues envieuses!

In rinsings from the scabrous legs of lepers;
In blistered feet and ancient wornout shoes;
In blood of asps and drugs all poisonous;
In gall of wolf or cunning fox or brock;
Be all these envious tongues burnt up to nought!

In brain of cat that never loved to fish
(Big, black, and old, without or tooth or gum);
In foam and drooling dribble of a dog,
A mighty hound by rabies driven mad;
In froth poured out from tight-lipped mullet's shell,
Hacked to small shreds by powerful chisel blows;
In water foul by ratlike snouts infested,
By frogs and loathsome toads and other beasts,
Serpents and snakes and all the horrid fowl:
Be all these envious tongues burnt up to nought!

In sublimate full perilous to touch,
And on the navel of a living serpent;
In bloods which in the barber's basin dry,
Which you may see with full moon in the sky,
One being black, the other green as chives;
In cankered sores and stinking basin dregs,
Where nurses wont to soak their filthy rags;
In those small baths that harlots love to use
(Who follows not has never brothel known):
Be all these envious tongues burnt up to nought!

Prince, all these dainty morsels place, I pray,
To filter through a finely woven cloth,
Watered by pourings from a dirty truss;
But first, I beg, in foetid pigs' manure,
Be all these envious tongues burnt up to nought!

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE DE LA BELLE HÉAULMIÈRE AUX FILLES DE JOIE

Or y pensez, belle Gantiere,
Qui m'escoliere souliez estre,
Et vous, Blanche la Savetiere,
Or, est-il temps de vous congnoistre!
Prenez à dextre et à senestre,
N'espargnez homme, je vous prie:
Car vieilles n'ont ne cours, ne estre,
Ne que monnoye qu'on descrie.

Et vous, la gente Saulcissiere,
Qui de dancer estes adextre,
Guillemette la Tapissiere,
Ne mesprenez vers votre maistre:
Tost vous fauldra clorre fenestre,
Quand deviendrez vielle, flestrie.
Plus ne servirez que viel prebstre,
Ne que monnoye qu'on descrie.

Jehanneton la Chaperonniere,
Gardez qu'amy ne vous empestre.
Katherine l'Esperonniere,
N'envoyez plus les hommes paistre:
Car qui belle n'est ne perpetre
Leur bonne grace, mais leur rie.
Laide vieillesse amour n'impetre,
Ne que monnoye qu'on descrie.

Filles, veuillez vous entremettre
D'escouter pourquoy pleure et crie:
C'est pour ce que ne me puy mettre,
Ne que monnoye qu'on descrie.

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE OF THE FAIR ARMOUNRESS TO THE FILLES DE JOIE

FAIR glover's maid, bethink you, dear—
Apt pupil you were wont to be!
Forsake your cobbling, Blanche, and hear
How best your lives to live full free!
Let no man rove at liberty,
But use them all from left and right,
For faded women frequently
Are but as dross used in despite.

And you, my sweetest sausageer,
Adept at dancing daintily,
And Guillemette, the weaving dear,
Hold well your cunning craft in fee;
For soon the lattice shut must be,
In withered skin there's no delight;
Of some fat priest the prey you'll be,
And but as dross used in despite.

Jeanneton, leave your hoods and hear,
Beware lest you embroiled be;
And Kate, make spurs no more, draw near—
Keep to your men most prudently;
When beauty's gone you then will see
That they've gone too, with laughter bright:
Ignored by love, old age will be
Empty as dross used in despite.

So, maidens, you have heard my plea,
How you must do to live aright,
Lest you should end up just like me
And be as dross used in despite.

FRANÇOIS VILLON

PROBLEME OU BALLADE AU NOM DE LA FORTUNE

FORTUNE fuz par clerchez jadis nommee,
Que, toy, François, crie et nomme meurtriere.
S'il y a hom d'aucune renommee
Meilleur que toy, faiz user en plaistriere
Par povrete et fouyr en carriere.
S'a honte viz, te dois-tu doncques plaindre?
Tu n'es pas seul: si ne te dois complaindre.
Regarde et voy, de mes faitz de jadis,
Maints vaillans horns par moy morts et roidiz,
Et, n'eusses-tu envers eulx ung soullon,
Appaise-toy, et mettz fin en tes diz:
Par mon conseil, prends tout en gre, Villon!

Contre grans roys je me suis bien armee,
Le temps qui est passé, car, en arriere,
Priame occis et toute son armee;
Ne lui valut tour, donjon ne barriere.
Et Hannibal, demoura-il derriere?
En Cartage, par moy, le feiz actaindre;
Et Scipion l'Affricquain feiz estaindre;
Julius Cesar au senat je vendis;
En Egipte Pompee je perdis;
En mer noyay Jason en ung boullon;
Et, une fois, Romme et Roummains ardis . . .
Par mon conseil, prends tout en gre, Villon!

Alexandre, qui tant fist de hamee,
Qui voulust voir l'estoille poucyniere,
Sa personne par moy fut inhumee.
Alphasar roy, en champ, sous la banniere,
Ruay jus mort: cela est ma maniere.

FRANÇOIS VILLON

PROBLEM OR BALLADE IN THE NAME OF FORTUNE

THE Scriveners, once, gave me the name of Fortune,
Whom thou decriest, François, callest Murdress.
Whenever men of fairer name than thine
Befall my path, I dig them deep in quarry,
When they are overcome in wretchedness.
If such men suffer, why then thou complain?
Thou'rt not alone, and hast no cause to grieve.
Look back upon my deeds of ancient times:
Full many a warrior starkly died through me,
Thou art as sawdust, side by side with them!
Be silent, cease your pitiful complaining:
Heed well, Villon, and seek not Fortune's favour!

I have arrayed myself against great Monarchs,
And in the misty past I once destroyed
Priam of Troy, and all his mighty host—
Of no avail to him were tower or dungeon.
And Hannibal, did he survive my scourge?
In Carthage town I caught him. Then I turned
And plucked the flower of Scipio Africanus.
So to the Senate, where I then sold Caesar,
And crushed out Pompey in the sands of Egypt.
Jason I drowned in Ocean's wildest flood;
And once burned proudest Rome, and all her Romans . . .
Heed well, Villon, and seek not Fortune's favour!

Alexander, who so prized his power
That he would lord it o'er the starry sky,
Was brought to dust, and buried deep by me.
King Alphasar, with battle honours flying,
I too eclipsed: such is my way with men.

Ainsi l'ay fait, ainsi le maintiendray;
Autre cause ne raison n'en rendray.
Holofernes l'ydolastre mauldiz,
Qu'occist Judic (et dormoit entandiz!)
De son poignart, dedans son pavillon;
Absallon, quoy! en fuyant suspendis . . .
Par mon conseil, prends tout en gre, Villon!

Povre François, escoute que te dis:
Se riens peusse sans Dieu de paradiz,
A toy n'aulture ne demourroit haillon:
Car, pour ung mal, lors j'en feroye dix.
Par mon conseil, prends tout en gre, Villon!

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE ET ORAISON

PERE Noé, qui plantastes la vigne,
Vous aussi, Loth, qui bustes au rocher,
Par tel party, qu'Amour, aux gens engigne,
De vos filles si vous feit approcher
(Pas ne le dy pour le vous reprocher),
Architriclin, qui bien sceustes cest art:
Tous trois vous pry que vous vueillez percher
L'ame du bon feu maistre Jehan Cotart!

Il fut jadis extraict de vostre ligne,
Luy qui beuvoit du meilleur et plus cher,
Et ne deust-il avoir vaillant ung pigne,
Certes, sur tous, c'estoit un bon archer.

So have I done, and so mean still to do,
Nor any rhyme nor reason shall I offer.
Holofernes, idolater accursed,
(While drugged with sleep) was killed for me by Judith,
Using his own true steel, in his own tent;
And as for Absalom from tree-top hanged . . .
Heed well, Villon, and seek not Fortune's favour!

So then, poor François, guard well what thou sayest.
Nothing can spring from Heaven without God's aid,
And, aidless, thou must also naked be.
For one disaster I'd as lief wreak ten:
Heed well, Villon, and seek not Fortune's favour!

FRANÇOIS VILLON

BALLADE AND PRAYER

O FATHER Noah, who didst plant the vine;
And Lot, deceived by love as thou didst lie
Drunk in the cave, heavy with ruddy wine,
That thy own daughters came themselves to try
(Nor is reproach to thee they should be by);
Architriclinus, famed in Cana far:
To you I pray, that you may set on high
The goodly soul of Master Jean Cotart!

He was a scion of your selfsame line,
And drank the richest drafts that gold could buy;
Though piece in purse was never left to shine,
Unerringly he'd to the taverns hie.

On ne luy sceut pot des mains arracher,
Car de bien boire oncques ne fut faitart.
Nobles seigneurs, ne souffrez empescher
L'ame du bon feu maistre Jehan Cotart!

Comme homme beu qui chancelle et trepigne,
L'ay veu souvent, quand il s'alloit coucher,
Et une foys il se fait une bigne,
Bien m'en souvient, à l'estal d'ung boucher.
Brief, on n'eust sceu en ce monde chercher
Meilleur pion, pour boire tost en tart.
Faictes entrer, quant vous orrez hucher,
L'ame du bon feu maistre Jehan Cotart.

Prince, il n'eust sceu jusqu'à terre cracher.
Tousjours crioit: Haro, la gorge m'ard!
Et si ne sceut oncq sa soif estancher,
L'ame du bon feu maistre Jehan Cotart.

MELLIN DE SAINT-GELAIS

CONTRE UN ENVIEUX

Je prie à Dieu qu'il vous doint pauvrete,
Hiver sans feu, vieillesse sans maison,
Grenier sans bled en l'arriere-saison,
Cave sans vin tout le long de l'ete.

Je prie à Dieu qu'a bon droict et raison
N'ayez chez vous rien qui ne vous deplaise,
Tant que pour estre un peu mieux à vostre aise
Vous pourchassiez d'estre mis en prison.

Je prie à Dieu, le roy du paradis,
Que mendiant vostre pain alliez querre
Seul, inconnu, et en estrange terre,
Non entendu par signes ni par ditz.

Je prie à Dieu que vous puissiez attendre
Qu'on ouvre l'huis, une nuit toute entiere,
Tout en pourpoint dessous une gouttiere,
Et que l'huis à vous ne veuille entendre.

MELLIN DE SAINT-GELAIS

D'UN CHARLATAN

UN charlatan disoit en plein marché
Qu'il monstreroit le diable à tout le monde;
Si n'y eut nul, tant fust il empesché,
Qui ne courust pour voir l'esprit immonde.
Lors une bourse assez large et profonde
Il leur desploie, et leur dit: Gens de bien,
Ouvrez vos yeux, voyez, y a-t-il rien?
—Non, dit quelqu'un des plus pres regardans.
—Et c'est, dit-il, le diable, oyez vous bien,
Ouvrir sa bourse et ne voir rien dedans.

I pray to God there be nor rhyme nor reason
May yield you anything your heart to please,
So that for better comfort, better ease,
You seek a prison cell at any season.

I pray to God, the Lord of Heaven and Earth,
That as you beg your way from hand to hand,
Alone, unwanted, wandering in foreign land,
Your speech be misconstrued, and nothing worth.

I pray to God that you may wait outside
All through the night before a fast-shut door,
Finely bedight, beneath a gutter's pour,
And none to hear or open from inside.

MELLIN DE SAINT-GELAIS

THE CHARLATAN

A CHARLATAN once said in the market square
That he would show the devil to any there;
And of them all there was no single one
Who Satan would not see for sheerest fun.
So then a purse he showed, both deep and wide,
And waved them on, and said: "Look well inside,
"And say, my friends, if anything is there?"
"No," said a man, and looked inside the bag.
"Then 'tis the very devil," quoth our wag,
"To ope one's purse, and find there's nought but air."

L'AMY IMPORTUN

UN ami vif vint à la dame morte,
 Et par prière il la cuida tenter
 De le vouloir aymer de mesme sorte,
 Puis la pressa jusqu'à la tourmenter;
 Mais mot ne dist, doncq, pour se contenter,
 Il essaya de l'embrasser au corps.
 Contraincte fut la Dame dire alors:
 "Je vous requiers, o Amy importun,
 Laissés les morts ensevelir les morts,
 Car morte suis pour tous, sinon pour un."

CLEMENT MAROT

RONDEAU DE L'AMOUR DU SIÈCLE ANTIQUE

Au bon vieulx temps, un train d'amour regnoit,
 Qui sans grand art et dons se demenoit;
 Si qu'un bouquet donné d'amour profonde,
 C'estoit donné toute la terre ronde:
 Car seulement au cœur on se prenoit.

Et si par cas à s'aimer on venoit,
 Sçavez-vous bien comme on s'entretenoit?
 Vingt ans, trente ans: cela duroit un monde
 Au bon vieulx temps.

MARGUERITE DE NAVARRE

THE IMPORTUNATE FRIEND

A LIVING lover sought his mistress dead,
And by his prayers he thought she might relent
And wish to love him as himself had said;
He urged her and her spirit did torment.
She nothing spake, so seeking some content,
He held her body in a long embrace.
Forced was the Lady then to say with grace:
"Importunate friend, I bid thee now have done!
"Let the dead bury the dead in their own place,
"For I am dead to all if not to one."

CLEMENT MAROT

RONDEAU: OF LOVE IN ANCIENT TIMES

IN olden times did love hold sway
Full artlessly by night and day.
If love doth spring from fragrant air,
Then all the earth was lovely there,
And in men's hearts love dwelt alway.

But if to love they did assay,
Know you how long they'd sport that way?
Twenty or thirty years they'd share
In olden times.

Or's est perdu ce qu'amour ordonnoit;
Rien que pleurs faintz, rien que ruses on n'oyt;
Qui voudra donc qu'à aymer je me fonde,
Il fault premier que l'amour on refonde,
Et qu'on la meine ainsi qu'on la menoit
Au bon vieulx temps.

CLEMENT MAROT

ÉPIGRAMME:

DE SOY MESME ET D'UN RICHE IGNORANT

RICHE ne suis, certes, je le confesse,
Bien ne pourtant, et nourri noblement;
Mais je suis leu du peuple et gentillesse
Par tout le monde, et dict on: "C'est Clement."
Maintz vivront peu, moy eternellement;
Et toy, tu as préz, fontaines et puits,
Bois, champs, chasteaux, rentes et gros appuis
C'est de nous deux la difference et l'estre.
Mais tu ne peux estre ce que je suis;
Ce que tu es, un chascun le peult estre.

Now love's commands have fled away;
Tears and guile do rule to-day.
So if I should as lover fare
Must love regain her virtue rare,
And rule as when she once held sway
In olden times.

CLEMENT MAROT

CLEMENT MAROT

BALLADE : CHANT DE MAY ET DE VERTU

VOULENTIERS en ce moys icy
La terre mue et renouvelle.
Maintz amoureux en font ainsi,
Subjectz à faire amour nouvelle
Par legierete de cervelle,
Ou pour estre ailleurs plus contens;
Ma façon d'aymer n'est pas telle,
Mes amours durent en tout temps.

N'y a si belle dame aussi
De qui la beaute ne chancelle;
Par temps, maladie ou soucy,
Laydeur les tire en sa naselle;
Mais rien ne peult enlaydir celle
Que servir sans fin je pretens;
Et pource qu'elle est tousjours belle,
Mes amours durent en tout temps.

Celle dont je dy tout cecy,
C'est Vertu, la nymphe eternelle,
Qui au mont d'honneur esclercy
Tous les vrayz amoureux appelle:
"Venez amans, venez, dit-elle,
"Venez à moi, je vous attens;
"Venez, ce dit la jovencelle,
"Mes amours durent en tout temps."

Prince, fais amye immortelle,
Et à la bien aymer entens;
Lors pourras dire sans cautelle:
"Mes amours durent en tout temps."

CLEMENT MAROT

BALLADE: SONG OF MAY AND VIRTUE

How gladly in the month of May
The earth is changed and new again!
But many a lover loves that way
And for another love is fain
Whose love doth spring from sickle brain
Or otherwise would happier be:
But I do think such loving vain,
My love will last eternally.

There is no lady fair and gay
Whose beauty deathless may remain;
Illness, or care, or time ere day
Will even the loveliness have taken;
But none the beauty can impair
Of her whom I love faithfully,
And since my love is ever fair
My love will last eternally.

She for whom I sing this lay
Is Virtue, the immortal May,
Who calls true lovers to the way
Where splendor is her due displayed:
"Come, lovers all from everywhere,
"I love all whom I see I love to feel
"I love all who are true and true to me,
"My love will last eternally!"

For ye, seek to love the World again,
And seek to love her falsely,
Then may ye see the world again
"My love will last eternally!"

CLEMENT MAROT

ÉPIGRAMME: DE L'ABBE ET DE SON VALET

MONSIEUR l'Abbe et monsieur son valet
Son faietz egaulx tous deux comme de cire:
L'un est grand fol, l'autre petit folet;
L'un veult railler, l'autre gaudir et rire;
L'un boit du bon, l'autre ne boit du pire;
Mais un debat au soir entre eulx s'esmeut,
Car maistre abbe toute la nuict ne veult
Estre sans vin, que sans secours ne meure,
Et son valet jamais dormir ne peult
Tandis qu'au pot une goutte en demeure.

CLEMENT MAROT

CHANSON

CHANGEONS propos, c'est trop chanté d'amours:
Ce sont clamours, chantons de la serpette:
Tous vigneron ont à elle recours.
C'est leur secours pour tailler la vignette;
O serpillette, o la serpillonnette,
La vignolette est par toy mise sus,
Dont les bons vins tous les ans sont yssus.

CLEMENT MAROT

EPGRAM: OF THE ABBOT AND HIS VALET

My lord the Abbot and his valet
Are moulded in the self-same way:
One's a great fool, the other no less;
One likes to sport, and the other to jest;
One likes good wine, and the other drinks well;
But they quarrel at evening, strange to tell:
For my lord the Abbot does not delight
To think he might be without wine in the night;
And the valet can never abide to think
There's still some liquor left to drink.

CLEMENT MAROT

Le dieu Vulcain, forgeron des haults dieux,
Forgea aux cieulx la serpe bien taillante,
De fin acier trempé en bon vin vieulx,
Pour tailler mieulx et estre plus vaillante.
Bacchus la vante, et dit qu'elle est seante
Et convenante à Noé le bon hom
Pour en tailler la vigne en la saison.

Bacchus alors chappeau de treille avoit,
Et arrivoit pour benistre la vigne;
Avec flascons Silenus le suyvoit,
Lequel beuvoit aussi droict qu'une ligne;
Puis il trepigne, et se faict une bigne;
Comme une guigne estoit rouge son nez;
Beaucoup de gens de sa race sont nez.

CLEMENT MAROT

CHANSON

NE sçay combien la haine est dure,
Et n'ay desir de le sçavoir;
Mais je sçay qu'amour, qui peu dure,
Faict un grand tourment recevoir.
Amour autre nom deust avoir;
Nommer le fault fleur ou verdure
Qui peu de temps se laisse veoir.

Vulcan, the blacksmith of the gods divine,
Forged a sharp cutting knife within the sky
Of finest steel, and soaked in good old wine
(It had a cutting edge more keen thereby).
Bacchus extolled it, and earthwards turned his eye:
"The very blade for Noah, noble man,
"To prune the vines in springtime when he can!"

Bacchus wore a hat of grape leaves twined,
And came to earth to bless the growing vine;
With many a Bagon Silenus came behind,
And drank full deep as straight as any line;
Then he did stagger and reel with heady wine,
Red as a cherry glowed his nose again;
A many men Silenus sped since then.

CLEMENT MAROT

Nommez le donc fleur ou verdure
Au cueur de mon leger amant;
Mais en mon cueur qui trop endure,
Nommez le roc ou dyamant:
Car je vy tousjours en ayment,
En ayment celuy qui procure
Que mort ne voyse consommant.

BONAVENTURE DES PERIERS

LES ROSES

UN jour de may, que l'aube retournée
Rafraichissoit la claire matinee,
Afin d'un peu recreer mes esprits,
Au grand verger, tout le long du pourpris
Me promenois par l'herbe fraische et drue
La où je vis la rosee expandue.
L'aube naissante avoit couleur vermeille
Et vous estoit aux roses tant pareille
Qu'eussiez doute si la belle prenoit
Des fleurs le teint, ou si elle donnoit
Aux fleurs le sien, plus beau que nulles choses:
Un mesme teint avoient l'aube et les roses.
Ja commençoient à leurs ailes estendre
Les beaux boutons; l'un estoit mince et tendre,
Encor tapi dessous sa coeffe verte;
Dont le fin bout un petit rougissoit:
De ce bouton la prime rose issoit . . .

A flower or blossoming green it is
In my love's heedless heart;
But in my heart it is but grief,
Call it a stone or rocky reef:
For I shall always live and love,
Loving what strives to wound my breath
With hidden unseen death.

RONAVENTURE DLS PERIERS

ROSE

Et dis ainsi: las! à peine sont nees
Ces belles fleurs qu'elles sont ja fanees;
Et, tant de biens que nous voyons fleurir,
Un mesme jour les fait naistre et mourir:
Mais si des fleurs la beaute si peu dure,
Ah ! n'en faisons nulle plainte à nature.
Des roses l'aage est d'autant de duree
Comme d'un jour la longueur mesuree . . .
Or, si ces fleurs un seul instant ravit,
Ce neanmoins, chacune d'elle vit
Son aage entier. Vous donc, jeunes fillettes,
Cueillez bientost les roses vermeillettes,
Puisque la vie, a la mort exposee,
Se passe ainsi que roses ou rosee.

ANTOINE HÉROËT

RONDEAU

CŒUR prisonnier, je le vous disois bien,
Qu'en la voyant vous ne seriez plus rien:
Si j'eusse eu lors le sens de vous entendre . . .
Mais 'qui eust pu deviner ny attendre
Qu'un si grand mal advint d'un si grand bien?
Puisqu'ainsi est, bien heureux je vous tien
D'estre arrêté à si noble lyen,
Pourveu aussi qu'elle vous vueille prendre,
Cœur prisonnier.

I said: "Scarce are they born to-day
"When they must droop and fade away;
"What riches burgeoned here we see,
"That live and die so hastily:
"But though so brief is Nature's sweet,
"Let us in nowise her entreat:
"Roses do live as long, I say,
"As measured time of length of day . . .
"What though an instant from each flower
"Should I ravished be? Each lovely hour
"Of life is lived. Then, maidens fair,
"Pluck all the roses everywhere,
"Since life, that ye to death display,
"Shall like the roses pass away."

ANTOINE HEROLT

Mais si vous laissez, aussi ne vous retien,
Et si sçay bien qu'ailleurs n'aymerez rien;
Ainsi mourrez n'ayant à qui vous rendre;
Dont elle et moy serons trop à reprendre,
Mais elle plus, que plus vous estes sien,
Cœur prisonnier.

MAURICE SCÈVE

EXTRAITS DE DELIE

Comme Hecate tu me feras errer
Et vif et mort cent ans parmy les Umbres;
Comme Diane au Ciel me resserrer,
D'où descendis en ces mortels encombres;
Comme regnante aux infernales ombres
Amoindriras ou accroistras mes peines.

Mais comme Lune infuse dans mes veines
Celle tu fus, es et seras, *Delie*,
Qu'Amour a joint à mes pensees vaines
Si fort que Mort jamais ne l'en deslie.

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Le jour passé de ta doulce presence
Fust un serain en hyver tenebreux,
Qui fait prouver la nuit de ton absence
A l'œil de l'ame estre un temps plus ombreux
Que n'est au corps ce mien vivre encombreux,
Qui maintenant me fait de soy refus.

Car dès le point que partie tu fus,
Comme le lievre accroupy en son giste,
Je tendiz l'oreille, oyant un bruyt confus,
Tout esperdu aux tenebres d'Egypte.

But if she leaves you, holds you not with ties,
I know full well nought else will you hold dear ;
So you will die as a man loveless dies ;
Wherefore both she and I shall seem unwise,
But she the more since to her you are more dear,
Captive heart.

MAURICE SCÈVE

EXTRACTS FROM DILLI

De toy la doulce et fresche souvenance
Du premier jour, qu'elle m'entra au cœur
Avec ta haulte et humble contenance,
Et ton regard d'Amour mesmes vainqueur,
Y despeingnit par si vive liqueur
Ton effigie au vif tant ressemblante,
Que depuis l'Ame estonnee et tremblante
De jour l'admire et la prie sans cesse:
Et sur la nuict tacite et sommeillante,
Quand tout repose, encor moins elle cesse.

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Cuydant ma Dame un rayon de miel prendre,
Sort une Guespe aspre comme la Mort,
Qui l'esguillon luy fische en sa chair tendre:
Dont de douleur le visage tout mort,
Ha ce n'est pas, dit-elle, qui me mord
Si durement, ceste petite Mouche:
J'ay peur qu'amour sur moy ne s'escarmouche.

Mais que crains tu ? luy dy je brievement.
Ce n'est point luy, Belle: Car quand il touche,
Il poinct plus doulx, aussi plus grievement.

U

CHRISTOPHE PLANTIN

LE BONHEUR DE CE MONDE

Avoir une maison commode, propre et belle,
Un jardin tapissé d'espaliers odorans,
Des fruits, d'excellent vin, peu de train, peu d'enfans,
Posseder seul sans bruit une femme fidele.

The memory of thee, so filled with grace,
Of that first day when it did pierce my heart
With thy so haughty yet so humble face,
And thy regard that Love himself could part,
Depicted there with such a lively art
Thy effigy, so lifelike that it dazed
The soul by day all trembling and amazed,
Admiring it with prayers unceasingly;
And in the night with silent slumber mazed,
When all doth sleep, it liveth vividly.

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My Lady thought that honey she would sip,
But came a wasp full angrily instead,
And gave her tender flesh a savage nip:
From pain the colour from her visage fled,
"Tis not," said she, "this insect that hath fed
So hardly on me, and which caused such pain:
I fear that Love doth make me to complain."

"What dost thou fear?" said I with counsel brief,
"Fair one, it is not Love, for Love's sweet pain
Is gentler far, but offers no relief."

CHRISTOPHE PLANTIN

THE HAPPINESS OF THIS WORLD

To have a home of comfort, neat and clean,
A garden carpeted with fragrant vine,
Few children, many fruits, the best of wine,
To own a faithful wife and live unseen;

N'avoir dettes, amour, ni procès, ni querelle,
Ni de partage à faire avecque ses parens,
Se contenter de peu, n'esperer rien des Grands,
Regler tous ses desseins sur un juste modele.

Vivre avecque franchise et sans ambition,
S'adonner sans scrupule à la devotion,
Domter ses passions, les rendre obeissantes,

Conserver l'esprit libre, et le jugement fort,
Dire son chapelet en cultivant ses entes,
C'est attendre chez soi bien doucement la mort.

P E R N E T T E D U G U I L L E T

C H A N S O N

O VRAIE amour, dont je suis prise,
Comment m'as-tu si bien apprise,
Que de mon jour tant me contente,
Que je n'en espere autre attente,
Que celle de ce doux amer,
Pour me guerir du mal d'aymer?

Du bien j'ay eu la jouissance
Dont il m'a donné congnoissance,
Pour m'assurer de l'amytie,
De laquelle il tient la moytie:
Doncques est-il plus doux qu'amer
Pour me guerir du mal d'aymer.

To have no debts, or loves, or quarrels mean,
And not to share with kindred what is thine,
Be pleased with little, vanity confine,
Not on the great but on true justice lean;

To live ambitionless and openly,
Unquestioning to follow pious prayer,
To tame thy passions with thy every breath;

To keep thy judgment strong and spirit free,
In righteous peace to tend thy flowers with care:
This is to wait full tranquilly on death.

PERNETTE DU GUILLET

SONG

TRUE love, to whom my heart is prey,
How dost thou hold me in thy sway,
That in each day I find no fault
But daily wait for love's assault,
This bitter-sweet, this restless ease,
To cure me of love's rare disease?

Love's richness do I truly know,
Which love so joyfully doth show,
And tells me of that friendship dear
Of which himself is only peer.
What better than this restless ease,
To cure me of love's rare disease?

Helas! amy, en ton absence
Je ne puis avoir assurance
Que celle, dont, pour son plaisir,
Amour cault me vient dessaisir
Pour me surprendre et desarmer:
Gueris moy donc du mal d'aymer.

PONTUS DE TYARD

SONNET

PÈRE du doux repos, Sommeil pere du songe,
Maintenant que la nuit, d'une grande ombre obscure,
Faict à cet air serain humide couverture,
Viens, Sommeil désiré, et dans mes yeux te plonge.

Ton absence, Sommeil, languissamment alonge,
Et me fait plus sentir la peine que j'endure.
Viens, Sommeil, l'assoupir et la rendre moins dure,
Viens abuser mon mal de quelque doux mensonge.

Ja le muet Silence un esquadron conduit
De fantosmes ballans dessous l'aveugle nuict,
Tu me dedaignes seul qui te suis tant devot!

Viens, Sommeil désiré, m'environner la teste,
Car d'un voeu non menteur un bouquet je t'appreste
De ta chere morelle, et de ton cher pavot.

Alas, my friend, when thou art gone,
I have no love to lean upon,
Save when he comes with ardent pleasure,
Disarming me in careless leisure . . .
Then aid me in this restless ease,
And cure me of love's rare disease.

PONTUS DE TYARD

SONNET

FATHER of gentle rest and dreams arise,
Now that dark night in her unending shade
Brings to this quiet a covering overlaid,
Come, longed-for Sleep, and plunge into mine eyes!

Thy absence, Sleep, too painfully defies
The feeling agony I have bewrayed.
Render less hard this drowsing ill displayed,
And cheat my languishing with soothing lies.

Now doth the silent god a host convey,
Beneath blind night, of dancing ghosts away:
Yet I to thee so loyal receive but scorn!

Come, longed-for Sleep, my musèd head embower:
For I would lend thee an unlying flower,
Sprung of thy nightshade and of thy poppy born.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

SONNET

Je hay plus que la mort un jeune casanier,
Qui ne sort jamais hors, sinon aux jours de feste,
Et craignant plus le jour qu'une sauvage beste,
Se fait en sa maison luy mesmes prisonnier.

Mais je ne puis aymer un vieillard voyager,
Qui court deçà delà, et jamais ne s'arreste,
Ains des pieds moins leger que leger de la teste,
Ne sejourne jamais non plus qu'un mēssager.

L'un sans se travailler en seurete demeure,
L'autre, qui n'a repos jusques à tant qu'il meure,
Traverse nuict et jour mille lieux dangereux:

L'un passe riche et sot heureusement sa vie,
L'autre, plus souffreteux qu'un pauvre qui mendie,
S'acquiert en voyageant un sçavoir malheureux.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

SONNET

FRANCE, mere des arts, des armes, et des loix,
Tu m'as nourry long temps du laict de ta mamelle:
Ores, comme un aigneau qui sa nourrisse appelle,
Je remplis de ton nom les antres et les bois.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

SONNET

YOUNG stay-at-home I hate beyond compare,
Who ne'er goes out except on holidays,
And fears like savage beast the sun's bright rays,
- Penning himself at home devoid of air.

No more I love the aged traveller,
Who wanders here and there and never stays;
Less light of foot than head with foolish ways,
Who pauses ne'er, like any messenger.

The one without exertion dwells secure;
The other wanders on with course unsure,
A thousand perils meeting night and day:

The one lives all his life in empty ease,
The other like a beggar suffering flees
From place to place—and learns the wretched way.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

SONNET

FRANCE! Mother of arts, and arms, and laws!
For long have I been suckled at thy breast:
Now, like a lamb that strays at time of rest,
Through woods and caves I call thee to my cause!

Si tu m'as pour enfant advoué quelquefois,
Que ne me respons-tu maintenant, o cruelle?
France, France, respons à ma triste querelle:
Mais nul, sinon Echo, ne respond à ma voix.

Entre les loups cruels j'erre parmy la plaine,
Je sens venir l'hyver, de qui la froide haleine
D'une tremblante horreur fait herisser ma peau.

Las! tes autres aigneaux n'ont faite de pasture,
Ils ne craignent le loup, le vent, ny la froidure:
Si ne suis-je pourtant le pire du troupeau.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

SONNET

FLATTER un crediteur, pour son terme allonger,
Courtiser un banquier, donner bonne esperance,
Ne suivre en son parler la liberte de France,
Et pour respondre un mot, un quart d'heure y songer:

Ne gaster sa sante par trop boire et manger,
Ne faire sans propos une folle despense,
Ne dire à tous venans tout cela que l'on pense,
Et d'un maigre discours gouverner l'estranger:

Cognoistre les humeurs, cognoistre qui demande,
Et d'autant que l'on a la liberte plus grande,
D'autant plus se garder que l'on ne soit repris:

Though called thy child, why dost thou never pause
Or give me answer now, oh cruellest?
France! France! Hearken my sad request!
But only Echo answers to my cause.

I stray mid cruel wolves about the plain,
I feel the winter coming, and the pain
Of bitter trembling cold besets my skin.

Alas! thy other lambs no pasture need,
Nor fear the cold, the wind, nor wolfish breed:
Yet of the flock I am not worst herein.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

SONNET

To flatter a creditor and win remand,
To court a banker and give hope again,
To speak not of French freedom—subject vain—,
To say no word ere thinking head in hand;

Not to waste health beyond what health can stand,
Not aimlessly to spend but to refrain,
Not to speak out thy thoughts in language plain,
But frugally to talk in a strange land;

To know the moods, and know who useth thee,
And while thou art at liberty and free
So long to cherish it and have no fears;

Vivre avec chacun, de chacun faire compte:
Voilà, mon cher Morel (dont je rougis de honte),
Tout le bien qu'en trois ans à Rome j'ay appris.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

SONNET

DEJA la nuit en son parc amassait
Un grand troupeau d'étoiles vagabondes,
Et, pour entrer aux cavernes profondes,
Fuyant le jour, ses noirs chevaux chassait;

Deja le ciel aux Indes rougissait,
Et l'aube encor, de ses tresses tant blondes
Faisant greler mille perlettes rondes,
De ses trésors les prés enrichissait;

Quand d'occident, comme une étoile vive,
Je vis sortir dessus ta verte rive,
O fleuve mien! une nymphe en riant.

Alors, voyant cette nouvelle aurore,
Le jour, honteux, d'un double teint colore
Et l'angevin et l'indique orient.

To live with everyman, and each one know:
Such, dear Morel (I shame to tell thee so),
Is all I learned in Rome in three long years.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

SONNET

Now in her meadowland has glorious Night
Pent up her starry flock to roam no more,
And to their deepest caverns swiftly pour
Her ebon steeds before the daytime bright;

Already from the Indies glows the light
Of rose-tipped Dawn, her golden hair before,
Showering with little pearls of glistening hoar
All through the fields and meads for our delight;

Then from the West, 'twas like a living star,
Beside the green-edged bank there came afar
A laughing nymph, born in my own fair stream:

And at this new Aurora, filled with shame,
Day painted round the sky a double frame
Of Indian dye and brightest Anjou's gleam.

VILLANELLE

En ce moys delicieux,
Qu'amour toute chose incite,
Un chacun à qui mieulx mieulx
La douceur du temps imite,
Mais une rigueur despite
Me faict pleurer mon malheur.
Belle et franche Marguerite,
Pour vous j'ay ceste douleur.

Dedans vostre œil gracieux
Toute douceur est escrite,
Mais la douceur de voz yeux
En amertume est confite,
Souvent la couleuvre habite
Dessous une belle fleur.
Belle et franche Marguerite,
Pour vous j'ay ceste douleur.

Or puis que je deviens vieux,
Et que rien ne me profite,
Desesperé d'avoir mieulx,
Je m'en iray rendre hermite,
Je m'en iray rendre hermite,
Pour mieulx pleurer mon malheur.
Belle et franche Marguerite,
Pour vous j'ay ceste douleur.

OACHIM DU BELLAY

VILLANELLE

IN this month of delight
Then for love all prepare,
And each as his right
Maketh love everywhere;
But a rigorous care
Brings but grieving to me:
Marguerite free and fair
I do sorrow for thee.

In thy eyes full of grace
All that's sweet is writ there,
But the sweetness gives place
To my bitterest care;
Oft a viperous lair
Neath a flower do I see:
Marguerite free and fair
I do sorrow for thee.

When old age is here
And the same bitter care,
Then without any tear
As a hermit I'll fare;
As a hermit I'll fare,
A sad lover I'll be:
Marguerite free and fair
I do sorrow for thee.

Mais si la faveur des Dieux
Au bois vous avoit conduite,
Ou, despere d'avoir mieulx,
Je m'en iray rendre hermite:
Peult estre que ma poursuite
Vous feroit changer couleur.
Belle et franche Marguerite,
Pour vous j'ay ceste douleur.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

SONNET

HEUREUX qui, comme Ulysse, a fait un beau voyage,
Ou comme cestuy là qui conquist la toison,
Et puis est retourné, plein d'usage et raison,
Vivre entre ses parents le reste de son aage!

Quand revoiray-je, hélas, de mon petit village
Fumer la cheminée: et en quelle saison
Revoiray-je le clos de ma pauvre maison,
Qui m'est une province, et beaucoup d'avantage?

Plus me plaist le séjour qu'ont basti mes ayeux,
Que des palais Romains le front audacieux:
Plus que le marbre dur me plaist l'ardoise fine,

Plus mon Loyre Gaulois, que le Tybre Latin,
Plus mon petit Lyre, que le mont Palatin,
Et plus que l'air marin la douceur Angevine.

But if the gods hear,
They will bring thee to where
In the woods without tear
As a hermit I fare;
Then my faithfulness rare
Shall thy heart give to me:
Marguerite free and fair
I do sorrow for thee.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

SONNET

HAPPY is he who journeys everywhere,
Like to Ulysses, or him who won the Fleece,
Then, full of worldly lore, returns in peace
With his own kin his aged years to share!

When shall I see again my village square
With smoking chimneys, when find sweet release
To see again my house, with shading trees,
More worth than any province, and more rare?

Sooner I'd have my own ancestral home,
Than those proud palaces of bold-faced Rome;
Sooner than marble hard, I'd have grey slate.

Sooner my Loire, than Tiber flowing fine,
Sooner my Lyre, than all Mount Palatine,
Mild Anjou's air, than all the salt sea spate.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

SONNET

Si nostre vie est moins qu'une journee
En l'eternel, si l'an qui faict le tour
Chasse noz jours sans espoir de retour,
Si perissable est toute chose nee,

Que songes-tu, mon ame emprisonnee?
Pourquoy te plaist l'obscur de nostre jour,
Si pour voler en un plus cler sejour
Tu as au dos l'aele bien empanee?

Là est le bien que tout esprit desire,
Là, le repos où tout le monde aspire,
Là est l'amour, là, le plaisir encore.

Là, o mon ame, au plus hault ciel guidee,
Tu y pourras recongnoistre l'Idee
De la beaute, qu'en ce monde j'adore.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

SONNET

COMME le champ semé en verdure foisonne,
De verdure se hausse en tuyau verdissant,
Du tuyau se herisse en espic florissant,
L'espic jaunit en grain, que le chaud assaisonne;

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

SONNET

If this our life is no more than a day
Within eternity, if every year
Hunts down our days that never more appear,
If all things born so swiftly must decay,

Why drest thou, my soul, the years away?
Why dost thou love the present darkness here,
Since if thou'dst fly to those high regions clear,
Then bravely thy broad wings thou mayst display?

There lies the goal of every heart's desire,
There is that rest to which all men aspire,
And there is love and pleasure evermore,

There, oh my soul, within the utmost sky!
There the Idea shalt thou find set on high,
Whose beauty in this world I do adore.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

SONNET

Just as a new sown field is lush with green
And proudly stands, its greenness all arrayed,
And from the stems the flowering ears displayed
To golden grain are turned with summer's sheen;

Et comme en la saison le rustique moissonne
Les ondoyans cheveux du sillon blondissant,
Les met d'ordre en javelle, et du ble jaunissant,
Sur le champ depouillé, mille gerbes façonne ;

Ainsi, de peu à peu, creut l'Empire romain,
Tant qu'il fut despouillé par la barbare main
Qui ne laissa de luy que ces marques antiques

Que chacun va pillant: comme on voit le gleneur,
Cheminant pas à pas, recueillir les reliques
De ce qui va tombant après le moissonneur.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

D'UN VANNEUR DE BLE AUX VENTS

A vous, troupe legere,
Qui d'aile passagere
Par le monde volez,
Et d'un sifflant murmure
L'ombrageuse verdure
Doucelement esbranlez,

J'offre ces violettes,
Ces lis et ces fleurettes,
Et ces roses icy,
Ces vermeillettes roses,
Tout freschement ecloses,
Et ces œillets aussi.

As in due time the harvester is seen,
Cutting the waving tresses of each glade
(In swaths disposing ere the corn doth fade)
Fashioning sheaves where once the flowers had been;

So, step by step, the Roman Empire grew,
Ere it was stripped by savages who knew
No other art than pillaging the sign

Of ancient life; even as the gleaners slow
Pillage along the new cut harvest line
Whate'er the reapers leave, then quietly go.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

THE WINNOWER TO THE WINDS

To you light winds I sing,
Who on fleet gentle wing
Do fly away,
Where oft your sighs have been
As all the shadowed green
You softly sway.

I bring these violets,
Lilies and flowerets,
These roses here;
These scarlet blooms I bring,
All newly opening,
With radiance clear.

De vostre douce haleine
Evantez cette plaine,
Evantez ce sejour,
Cependant que j'ahanne
A mon ble que je vanne
A la chaleur du jour.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

SONNET

COMME lon void de loing sur la mer courroucee
Une montaigne d'eau d'un grand branle ondoyant,
Puis trainant mille flotz, d'un gros choc abboyant
Se crever contre un roc, où le vent l'a poussee:

Comme on void la fureur par l'Aquillon chassee
D'un sifflement aigu l'orage tournoyant,
Puis d'une aile plus large en l'air esbanoyant
Arrester tout à coup sa carriere lassee:

Et comme on void la flamme ondoyant en ces lieux
Se rassemblant en un, s'aguiser vers les cieux,
Puis tumber languissante: ainsi parmy le monde

Erra la Monarchie: et croissant tout ainsi
Qu'un flot, qu'un vent, qu'un feu, sa course vagabonde
Par un arrest fatal s'est venu' perdre icy.

With your sweet breath again
Breathe over all this plain
 With breezes fleet,
What time the corn I blow
And winnow mid the glow
 Of Daytime heat.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

SONNET

As from afar the angry waves are seen
High pitched in swaying waters, then a train
Of myriad crests in mighty roar again
Breaks on a rock cast down by the wind between;

As from afar the furious North wind keen
Is seen to whirl the storm in shrill-toned pain,
Then on a wider wing the air again
Stops short where erst a frantic race had been;

And as from far the flickering flames that rise
Look each like each, and stretch up to the skies
Only to droop and die; so in this world

Wandered the Monarchy; and, growing so,
Like any wave or wind or flame-light hurled
Was sudden checked, and utterly brought low.

JEAN DE BAÏF

LES MUSES AU POËTE

UN jour, quand de l'yver l'ennuieuse froidure
S'atiedist, laissant place au printemps gracieux,
Lorsque tout rit aux champs et que les prez joyeux
Peignent de belles fleurs leur riante verdure;

Pres du Clain tortueux, sous une roche obscure,
Un doux somme ferma d'un doux lien mes yeux.
Voicy, en mon dormant, une clairte des Cieux
Venir l'ombre enflamer d'une lumiere pure,

Voicy venir des Cieux, sous l'escorte d'Amour,
Neuf nymphes qu'on eust dit estre toutes jumelles;
En rond aupres de moy elles firent un tour;

Quand l'une me tendant de myrte un verd chapeau,
Me dit: Chante d'amour d'autres chansons nouvelles,
Et tu pourras monter à nostre saint coupeau.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

SONNET: SUR LA MORT DE MARIE

COMME on voit sur la branche au mois de mai la rose
En sa belle jeunesse, en sa premiere fleur,
Rendre le ciel jaloux de sa vive couleur,
Quand l'aube de ses pleurs au point du jour l'arrose;

JEAN DE BAÏF

THE MUSES TO THE POET

ONE day when winter's tedious cold sheen
Gave way to all the mildness of the spring,
When all the joyous meadowlands did ring
With laughter, and the flowers put on their green;

Neath a dark rock, beside the Clain serene,
A slumber to my eyes did visions bring:
Here, as I slept, a bright celestial thing
Came forth and shed pure light where shade had been;

Here from the Heavens, in Love's company,
There came nine nymphs, and each was like to each.
Round me they made a circle radiantly.

Then they did deck me with a myrtle crown,
And said: "Sing now of love, and new songs teach;
"So shalt thou dwell with us, no more cast down."

PIERRE DE RONSARD

SONNET: ON THE DEATH OF MARIE

Just as in early May a rose in flower,
In the first glory of its wondrous youth,
Makes Heaven envious with jealous ruth,
And Dawn drops tears upon it hour by hour;

La grace dans sa feuille, et l'amour se repose,
Embaumant les jardins et les arbres d'odeur;
Mais, battue ou de pluie ou d'excessive ardeur,
Languissante elle meurt feuille à feuille declose.

Ainsi en ta premiere et jeune nouveaute,
Quand la terre et le ciel honoraient ta beaute,
La Parque t'a tuee, et cendre tu reposes.

Pour obseques reçois mes larmes et mes pleurs,
Ce vase plein de lait, ce panier plein de fleurs,
Afin que vif et mort ton corps ne soit que roses.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

MADRIGAL: A HELENE

Si c'est aimer, Madame, et de jour et de nuit,
Resver, songer, penser le moyen de vous plaire,
Oublier toute chose, et ne vouloir rien faire
Qu'adorer et servir la beaute qui me nuit,

Si c'est aimer, de suivre un bonheur qui me fuit,
De me perdre moymesme et d'estre solitaire,
Souffrir beaucoup de mal, beaucoup craindre et me taire,
Pleurer, crier mercy, et m'en voir esconduit,

Si c'est aimer, de vivre en vous plus qu'en moymesme,
Cacher d'un front joyeux une langueur extresme,
Sentir au fond de l'ame un combat inegal,
Chaud, froid, comme la fievre amoureuse me traite,

Grace in its leaves and petals, love its dower,
It then embalms the trees with fragrant truth,
But tashed with rain, or passion-burnt its youth,
The petals one by one desert the bower:

So in the first new flush of youthfulness,
When Heaven and Earth adored your loveliness,
Destiny struck, and like dead dust you lie.

As mourning gifts receive my bitter tear,
This brimming milk, these flowers for your bier:
So may you yet be roses though you die.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

MADRIGAL: TO HELEN

If this is love, my Lady, night and day
To think and plan and dream how I may please,
And to forget all things and know no ease
Than to adore and serve thee as I may;

If this is love, for happiness to play—
Empty pursuit and lost amid the trees—
To know great pain yet to have no release,
To weep and beg for mercy, shunned away;

If this is love, to live in thee not me,
To smile and hide my agonising plea,
To feel within my heart unequal strife,
Now hot now cold with fever all on fire,

Honteux, parlant à vous, de confesser mon mal:
Si cela c'est aimer, furieux je vous aime,
Je vous aime, et sçay bien que mon mal est fatal,
Le cœur le dit assez, mais la langue est muette.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

SONNET : A CASSANDRE

UNE beaute de quinze ans enfantine,
Un or frisé de maint crespé anneau,
Un front de rose, un teint demoiselle,
Un ris qui l'ame aux astres achemine,

Une vertu de telle beaute digne,
Un col de neige, une gorge de lait,
Un coeur ja mur en un sein verdelet,
En dame humaine une beaute divine:

Un oeil puissant de faire jours les nuicts,
Une main doulce à forcer les ennuy,
Qui tient ma vie en ses doigts enfermee,

Avec un chant decoupé doucement,
Or' d'un souris, or' d'un gémissement:
De tels sorciers ma raison fust charmee.

Ashamed to tell thee of my lonely life:
If this is love, then madly I love thee,
I love thee, yet with death my heart is rife;
The heart speaks out, but silent is the lyre.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

SONNET: TO CASSANDRA

A CHILDLIKE beauty rich in fifteen years,
An aureole with many a curling tress,
A rose-tint brow and cheeks of maidenness,
A laugh to lift my heart into the spheres,

A virtue which such beauty nobly peers,
A snowy neck, a milk-white throat to press,
A full ripe heart within a ripening breast,
A human maid in beauty no death fears,

A potent glance to turn night into day,
A gentle hand to charm all cares away,
Which in soft fingers holds my life in fee,

Then, with a half-sung song of sweetest air,
Or with a smile, or sighing with despair:—
Such magic stole away my heart and me.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

HYMNE A LA NUIT

Nurr, des amours ministre, et ministre fidelle,
Des arrests de Venus, et des saintes lois d'elle,
 Qui secrete accompagnes
L'impatient amy de l'heure accoustumee,
O mignonne des Dieux, mais plus encore aimee
 Des estoilles compagnes,

Nature de tes dons honore l'excellence,
Tu caches les plaisirs dessous muet silence
 Que l'amour jouissante
Donne, quand ton obscur estroitement assemble
Les amans embrassez, et qu'ils tombent ensemble
 Sous l'ardeur languissante:

Lors que la main tatonne ores la cuisse, et ore
Le tetin pommelé qui ne s'egale encore
 A nul rubi qu'on voye:
Et la langue, en errant sur la joue, et la face,
Plus d'odeurs et de fleurs d'un seul baiser amasse
 Que l'Orient n'envoye.

C'est toy qui les soucis et les gennes mordantes,
Et tout le soin enclos en noz ames dolentes
 Par ton present arrachés.
C'est toy qui rens la vie aux vergers qui languissent,
Aux jardins la rousee, et aux cieux qui noircissent
 Les idoles attachés.

Mets si te plaist, Deesse, une fin à ma peine,
Et donte sous mes bras celle qui m'est trop pleine
 De menasses cruelles:
A fin que de ses yeux (yeux qui captif me tiennent)
Les trop ardents flambeaux plus bruler ne me viennent
 Le fond de mes mouëlles.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

HYMN TO NIGHT

DARK Night, great Minister of Love, how faithfully
Observest thou her laws and every high decree!

Thou goest quietly

With each impatient lover at the familiar hour:

Oh darling of the Gods, in whose celestial bower,

The stars do love but thee!

The excellence of thy gifts to Nature is most rare;

Delights thou dost conceal within a silent air,

Which true love doth enjoy,

When thy dark mantle falls about the quiet land;

And lovers lip to lip, and lovers hand in hand

On fire, are mute and coy.

And when the fingers feel for naked thigh or breast

(Whose rounded colouring of all gems is the best,

Richer than ruby seen);

And when the gentle tongue to cheek and forehead strays,

Reaping in one long kiss more fragrance as it plays

Than in the East has been;

'Tis thou who watchest them, and all the torturing care,

And all the griefs and woes that beset us everywhere

By thy gift are torn out.

'Tis thou who givest life to flowers and orchard trees,

And to the gardens dew, and to the skies great ease

By hanging stars about.

If it shall please thee, goddess, of my pain make an end:

And bring within my arms her who too oft doth send

Threats of grave cruelty;

So that her scornful eyes (which hold me captive yet)

Never again sear deep. So may I quite forget

Her lovely enmity.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

ODE: A LA FONTAINE BELLERIE

O FONTAINE Bellerie,
Belle fontaine chérie
De nos Nymphes quand ton eau
Les cache au creux de ta source
Fuyantes le Satyreau,
Qui les pourchasse à la course
Jusqu'au bord de ton ruisseau:

Tu es la Nymphé éternelle
De ma terre paternelle:
Pource en ce pre verdelet
Voy ton Poëte qui t'orne
D'un petit chevreau de lait,
A qui l'une et l'autre corne
Sortent de front nouvelet.

L'Este je dors ou repose
Sus ton herbe, ou je compose,
Caché sous tes saules vers,
Je ne sçay quoy, qui ta gloire
Envoira par l'univers,
Commandant à la Memoire
Que tu vives par mes vers.

L'ardeur de la Canicule
Ton verd rivage ne brule,
Tellement qu'en toutes pars
Ton ombre est espaisse et drue
Aux pasteurs venans des parcs,
Aux bœufs las de la charrue,
Et au bestial espars.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

ODE: TO THE FOUNTAIN BELLERIE

FOUNTAIN of Belleriel
My well-belovèd spring,
Where all our Nymphs do in thy waters hide
Within thy hollowed deep,
When Satyrs, roused from sleep,
Pursue them to thy gently streaming side.

Thou are the deathless Nymph
Of my own fatherland!
Behold thy Poet in this meadow green,
And how he brings to thee
A suckling kid to see
With sprouting horns and skin of youngest sheen.

In summertime I rest
Upon thy grassy bank,
Composing verses neath thy willow tree,
To sing thy glory far
To the remotest star,
That all the world shall know of thee through me.

Sirius' burning heat
Can never scorch thy grass
So lush it is, and deep thy quiet shade.
When shepherds come here now
All weary from the plough,
They and their oxen rest within the glade.

Io, tu seras sans cesse
Des fontaines la princesse,
Moy celebrant le conduit
Du rocher percé, qui darde
Avec un enroue bruit
L'eau de ta source jazarde
Qui trepillante se suit.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

ODE : A CASSANDRE

MIGNONNE, allons voir si la rose,
Qui ce matin avoit desclose
Sa robe de pourpre au soleil,
A point perdu ceste vespree
Les plis de sa robe pourpree,
Et son teint au vostre pareil.

Las! voyez comme en peu d'espace,
Mignonne, elle a dessus la place,
Las! las, ses beautez laisse cheoir!
O vrayment marastre nature,
Puis qu'une telle fleur ne dure
Que du matin jusques au soir!

Donc, si vous me croyez, mignonne,
Tandis que vostre age fleuronne
En sa plus verte nouveaute,
Cueillez, cueillez vostre jeunesse:
Comme à ceste fleur, la vieillesse
Fera ternir votre beaute.

Thou evermore shalt be
Princess of all the springs,
I hymning ever of the piercèd rock
Where roars with mighty din
The deep stream far within
Which then leaps forth with sudden shimmering shock.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

ODE: TO CASSANDRA

COME, my darling, let us see the rose,
Which early did disclose
Her crimson garment to the sun,
That she has wholly lost this eventide
And shed her petals wide,
Coloured as your cheeks in one.

Alas, my darling, in how short a space
Has she yielded fragrant place,
With all her beauties fall'n away!
Oh harsh indeed must mother nature be,
Since so cruelly
A flower's life is but a day!

Then if, my darling, you would heed me now,
What time your maiden brow
Betrays your lovely youthfulness,
Gather at once the fruits of glorious years,
Nor let old age's tears
Turn all your beauty into witheredness.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

SONNET: A HELENE

ADIEU belle Cassandre, et vous belle Marie,
Pour qui je fu trois ans en servage à Bourgeuil:
L'une vit, l'autre est morte, et ores de son oeil
Le ciel se resiouist dont la terre est marrie,

Sur mon premier Avril, d'une amoureuse ennuie
J'adoray vos beautez: mais vostre fier orgueil
Ne s'amollit jamais pour larmes ny pour deuil,
Tant d'une gauche main la Parque ourdit ma vie.

Maintenant en Automne encores malheureux
Je vy comme au Printemps de nature amoureux,
A fin que tout mon age aille au gre de la peine.

Ores que je deusse estre affranchi du harnois,
Mon maistre Amour m'envoye à grands coups de carquois,
R'assiéger Ilion pour conquerir Helene.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

ODE: A MACÉE

MA petite Nymphé Macée
Plus blanche qu'yvoire taillé,
Plus blanche que neige amassee,
Plus blanche que du laict caillé:
Ton beau teint ressemble le lis
Avecque les roses cueillis.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

SONNET: TO HELEN

CASSANDRA, dear, farewell, and beautiful Marie,
For whom in Bourgueil three years was I chained;
One lives, but one is dead and heaven sustained
By her high glance, on earth mourned grievously;

In my first April, loving and carefree,
I loved your beauties: but your pride contained
No softness when my mournful tears I rained,
For Fate has helped my life but backwardly.

Now in the Autumn of my bitter years,
As once in Spring, I live on lover's fears,
That all my age by grief be held in fee.

Now when I should no fond allegiance owe,
My Master, love, incites me on to go
To lay new siege to Troy and Helen free.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

ODE: TO MACÉE

My little nymph, Macée,
Whiter than ivory fine,
Whiter than drifting snow,
Whiter than milky wine,
Thy colour is the glow
Of lilies with roses gay.

Ton beau chef à mes yeux desœuvre
Où le Ciel des beautez donneur,
Employa sa peine et son œuvre
Curieux de luy faire honneur.
Desœuvre ton beau front aussi
Heureux object de mon souci.

Plus belle que Venus tu marches:
Ton front est beau, tes yeux sont beaux,
Qui flambent sous deux noires arches,
Comme deux celestes flambeaux,
D'où le brandon fut allumé
Qui tout le cœur m'a consommé.

Ce fut ton œil, douce mignonne,
Qui d'un regard traistre escarté,
Les miens encores emprisonne.
Peu soucieux de liberte,
Et qui me desrobe le cœur
Pour me desseicher en langueur.

Te voyant jeune simple et belle,
Tu me sucés l'ame et le sang.
Monstre moy ta rose nouvelle,
Je di ton sein d'ivoire blanc,
Et tes deux rondelets tetons
Qui s'enflent comme deux boutons.

Las! puis que ta beaute premiere
Ne me daigne faire merci,
Et que moins amoureux et fiere
Tu prens plaisir de mon souci,
Aumoins regarde sur mon front
Les maux que tes beaux yeux me font.

Thy head distracts my eyes,
For Heaven has fashioned thee
With finest skill and care,
That thou may wondrous be.
Thy brow surpassing fair
Tells me where beauty lies.

Not Venus walked so proud:
Thy forehead's fair, thy eyes are fair
Which shine neath arching brows,
On fire with heaven's flare,
Which could my heart arouse
To sing my passion loud.

My darling, thy sweet eye,
Which treacherously strayed,
Imprisoned all my gaze
And free has never played
Since I found loving ways,
And thought of grief to die.

So simple, young and free,
Thou art my heart and care:
Show me thy open rose—
I mean thy white breast bare,
With little points that close
And rise like flowers to be.

But since thy beauteous charm
Will grant me no reprieve,
And, proud and loveless, thou
Dost joy that I must grieve,
Look but upon my brow
And see my pain and harm.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

SONNET: A HELENE

Je vous envoie un bouquet que ma main
Vient de trier de ces fleurs epanies:
Qui ne les eust à ce vespre cueillies,
Cheutes à terre elles fussent demain.

Cela vous soit un exemple certain
Que vos beautez, bien qu'elles soient fleuries,
En peu de temps cherront toutes flaitries,
Et comme fleurs periront tout soudain.

Le temps s'en va, le temps s'en va, ma Dame,
Las! le temps, non, mais nous, nous en allons,
Et tost serons estendus sous la lame:

Et des amours desquelles nous parlons,
Quand serons morts, ne sera plus nouvelle:
Pour ce, ayez-moy, ce pendant qu'estes belle.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

SONNET: A HELENE

Quand vous serez bien vieille, au soir, à la chandelle,
Assise aupres du feu, devidant et filant,
Direz chantant mes vers, en vous esmerveillant:
Ronsard me celebroit du temps que j'estois belle.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

SONNET: TO HELEN

I SEND you now a sheaf of fairest flowers
Which my hand picked; yet are they so full blown,
Had no one plucked them they had died alone,
Fallen to earth before to-morrow's hours.

Then let this be a portent in your bowers:
Though all your beauteous loveliness is grown,
In a brief while it falls to earth o'erthrown,
Like withered blossoms, stripped of all their powers.

Away flows Time, Belovèd, fast away!
Alas, not Time! ourselves with every day,
Who soon must be no more than empty air;

And of those loves we love to speak of, dear,
When we are dead there will be none to hear;
Then love me, while you are so wondrous fair.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

SONNET: TO HELEN

WHEN you are old, at evening by the fire,
Sitting and spinning in the flickering light,
You will say, marvelling at my songs' delight,
"Ronsard praised my beauty with his lyre."

Lors vous n'aurez servante oyant telle nouvelle,
Desja sous le labeur à demy sommeillant,
Qui au bruit de mon nom ne s'aille resveillant,
Benissant vostre nom de louange immortelle.

Je seray sous le terre, et, fantosme sans os,
Par les ombres myrteux je prendray mon repos:
Vous serez au fouyer une vieille accroupie,

Regrettant mon amour et vostre fier desdain.
Vivez, si m'en croyez, n'attendez à demain:
Cueillez des aujourd'huy les roses de la vie.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

ODE: A UN AUBESPIN

BEL aubespín fleurissant,
Verdissant
Le long de ce beau rivage,
Tu es vestu jusqu'au bas
De longs bras
D'une lambrunche sauvage

Deux camps de rouges fourmis
Se sont mis
En garnison sous ta souche:
Dans les pertuis de ton tronc
Tout du long
Les avettes ont leur couche.

No handmaiden to know this will enquire,
Already half asleep and out of sight,
Who at my name would start to hear aright,
Blessing your name which Ronsard could inspire.

I shall be deep enearthed, a formless ghost,
Taking my rest with all the shadowy host;
You by the fire, a woman with a dream

Of old regret at love and proud disdain.
Live then to-day that never comes again;
Pluck all life's roses, plunge within life's stream.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

ODE: THE HAWTHORN IN FLOWER

BEAUTIFUL hawthorn tree in flower,
Your green bower
Stretches along the river's edge;
And you are dressed from head to foot,
With twisted root,
In a wild and thorny hedge.

Red ants swarm upon the ground
All around
At your feet in brightest red;
In the tangle of your boughs
Birds soon rouse
Morning from their leafy bed.

Le chantre Rossignolet,
Nouvelet,
Courtisant sa bien aimée,
Pour ses amours alléger,
Vient loger
Tous les ans en ta ramée.

Sur ta cyme il fait son ny
Tout uny
De mousse et de fine soye,
Où ses petits esclorront,
Qui seront
De mes mains la douce proye.

Or vy, gentil aubespín,
Vy sans fin,
Vy sans que jamais tonnerre,
Ou la coignée, ou les vents,
Ou les temps
Te puissent ruer par terre.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

CONTRE LES BUCHERONS DE LA FOREST DE GASTINE

Escoute, bucheron, arrête un peu le bras:
Ce ne sont pas des bois que tu jettes à bas;
Ne vois-tu pas le sang lequel degoutte à force
Des nymphes qui vivoient dessous la dure escorce?

Here the nightingale doth sing,
Yearly bring
To his mate a lover's vow,
Wooing so where she doth dwell
With magic spell
From the highest hawthorn bough.

In thy treetop he has made,
All arrayed,
A nest of silken moss, and gay;
Whence the nestlings soon will fly
By and by,
In my clasp a gentle prey.

Live, then, gentle hawthorn, live!
May fate give
Life unending, thunderless;
Neither axe nor keenest blast
Thee at last
Tear down in harsh bitterness!

PIERRE DE RONSARD

AGAINST THE WOODCUTTERS OF THE FOREST OF GASTINE

HOLD a while, woodman, stay your arm and hear:
This is not wood which you cast proudly down;
Do you not see the blood which spurts and streams,
The blood of nymphs who lived within that bark?

Sacrilege meurtrier, si on pend un voleur
Pour piller un butin de bien peu de valeur,
Combien de feux, de fers, de morts, et de detresses
Merites-tu, meschant, pour tuer nos deesses?

Forest, haute maison des oiseaux bocagers!
Plus le cerf solitaire et les chevreuls legers
Ne paistront sous ton ombre, et ta verte criniere
Plus du soleil d'este ne rompra la lumiere.

Plus l'amoureux pasteur sus un troncq adossé,
Enfant son flageolet à quatre trous persé,
Son mastin à ses pieds, à son flanc la houlette,
Ne dira plus l'ardeur de sa belle Janette:
Tout deviendra muet; Echo sera sans voix;
Tu deviendras campagne, et en lieu de tes bois,
Dont l'ombrage incertain lentement se remue,
Tu sentiras le soc, le coutre, et la charrue;
Tu perdras ton silence, et Satyres et Pans,
Et plus le cerf chez toy ne cachera ses fans.

Adieu, vieille forest, le jouet de Zephire,
Où premier j'accorday les langues de ma lyre,
Où premier j'entendi les fleches resonner
D'Apollon, qui ne vint tout le cœur estonner;
Où premier admirant la belle Calliope,
Je devins amoureux de sa neuvaine trope,
Quand sa main sur le front cent roses me jetta,
Et de son propre laict Euterpe m'allaita.

Adieu, vieille forest, adieu, testes sacrees,
De tableaux et de fleurs en tout temps reverees,
Maintenant le desdain des passans alterez,
Qui, bruslez en l'este des rayons etherez,
Sans plus trouver le frais de tes douces verdurees,
Accusent tes meurtriers, et leur disent injures!

Impious murderer, if hanging is the price
Of those who pilfer things of little worth,
How many fires and chains, deaths, miseries,
Should be your due, who killed our goddesses?

High forest, woodland mansion of the birds!
Never again shall harts or lonely deer
Pasture your shadowed glades, and your green lawns
Never again receive the summer sunlight.

Never again shall lovelorn shepherd sit
Against some tree, tuning his flageolet,
His hound stretched at his feet, and crook at side,
To tell his love for beautiful Jeannette:
All will be mute; Echo will have no voice;
You will be meadows, and where your trees were once,
Whose dim seen shadows slowly shift and stir,
You will feel the cutting plough and coulter sharp;
Your silence lost, Pan and his Satyrs fled,
No more the deer shall hide his fauns in you.

Farewell, old forest, Zephyr's favoured plaything,
Where first I learned to tune my lyre's tongues;
Where first I heard the arrows echoing
Of Bright Apollo, and wondered in my heart;
Where first I wooed Calliope the fair,
And fell in love with all her poetry,
When on my brow she threw a hundred roses,
And Euterpe herself gave me her milk.

Farewell, old forest, farewell sacred heads,
At all times high revered by field and flowers,
And now the scorn of all the passers-by
Who, burning in summer from the airy rays,
No longer find the cool green of your shade:
Let these indict your murderers, and revile them!

Adieu, chesnes, couronne aux vaillans cotoyens,
Arbres de Jupiter, germes Dodoneens,
Qui premiers aux humains donnastes à repaistre;
Peuples vrayment ingrats, qui n'ont sceu recognoistre
Les biens receus de vous, peuples vrayment grossiers,
De massacrer ainsi leurs peres nourriciers!

Que l'homme est malheureux qui au monde se fie!
O dieux, que veritable est la philosophie,
Qui dit que toute chose à la fin perira,
Et qu'en changeant de forme une autre vestira!

De Tempe la vallee un jour sera montagne,
Et la cyme d'Athos une large campagne:
Neptune quelquefois de ble sera couvert:
La matiere demeure et la forme se perd.

LOUISE LABÉ

SONNET

O BEAUX yeux bruns, o regards destournez,
O chaus soupirs, o larmes expandues,
O noires nuits vainement atendues,
O jours luisans vainement retournez!

O tristes pleints, o desirs obstinez,
O tems perdu, o peines despendues,
O mile morts en mile rets tendues,
O pires maus contre moi destinez!

Farewell, oaks, fair crown of bravest hillsides,
Jupiter's trees, and sprung from old Dodona,
Who first gave men a tree for their delight:
Ungrateful men, who have not recognised
The rich they had of you—a monstrous people
To slaughter so those who had cherished them!

Oh hapless man that trusteth in the world!
You gods, how true is that philosophy,
Which says that all things perish in the end
And, changing from one form, assume another!

Some day Tempe's vale will be a hill,
Mount Athos' peak will be an open plain;
Neptune some time will wave with growing corn:
Matter endures though form be lost for ever.

LOUISE LABÉ

SONNET

OH beautiful brown eyes, looks turned aside!
Oh burning sighs! Oh vainly poured out tears!
Oh blackest nights, attended by black fears!
Oh shining days but never joy espied!

Oh sad laments! Oh longings vainly sighed!
Oh sorrows wept throughout the bitter years!
Oh thousand deaths with all your deathly peers!
Oh worst of ills to which I'm ever tied!

O ris, o fronts, cheveux, bras, mains et doigts!
O lut pleintif, viole, archet et vois!
Tant de flambeaus pour ardre une femelle!

De toy me plein, que tant de feus portant,
En tant d'endroits d'iceus mon cœur tatant,
N'en est sur toy volé quelque estincelle.

LOUISE LABÉ

SONNET

TANT que mes yeux pourront larmes espandre
A l'heur passé avec toy regretter,
Et qu'aus sanglots et soupirs resister
Pourra ma voix, et un peu faire entendre;

Tant que ma main pourra les cordes tendre
Du mignart lut, pour tes graces chanter;
Tant que l'esprit se voudra contenter
De ne vouloir rien fors que toy comprendre;

Je ne souhaite encore point mourir.
Mais, quand mes yeus je sentiray tarir,
Ma voix cassee, et ma main impuissante,

Et mon esprit en ce mortel sejour
Ne pouvant plus montrer signe d'amante,
Priray la Mort noircir mon plus cler jour.

Oh lovely hair and hands, and arms and brow!
Oh piteous lute, viol and voice, heed now!
So many brands to set on fire a maid!

Of thee do I complain whose myriad fires
Have every way possessed my whole desires,
Though thou impervious to flame hast stayed.

LOUISE LABÉ

SONNET

As long as tears do well up in my eyes
To mourn past happiness with thee possessed,
And that my tearful sighs may be repressed
Within my voice, remembering time that flies;

As long as with my hand I can surprise
My sweet lute strings to hymn thy graces blessed;
As long as my poor spirit hath no zest
To stray beyond the compass of thy eyes;

As long as these things last I would not die:
But when the well-springs of my eyes are dry,
Broken my voice, my hand grown powerless,

My spirit wandering on its mortal way,
Unable more to tell of love's distress,
Then shall I pray Death darken brightest day.

REMY BELLEAU

LES VENDANGEURS

C'ESTOIT en la saison que la troupe rustique
S'appreste pour couper de ceste plante unique,
De ce rameau sacré le raisin pourprissant;
C'estoit en la saison que le fruit jaunissant
Laisse veuve la branche, et le souillart Autonne
Faict escumer les bords de la vineuse tonne.
Un chascun travailloit, l'un après le pressoir,
L'autre à bien estouper le ventre à l'entonnoir,
Et d'un fil empoissé avec un peu d'estoupes
Calfeutrer les bondond: les uns lavoyent les coupes,
Et rinsoyent les barils, autres sur leurs genoux
Aiguisoient des faucets pour percer les vins doux,
Et piquettans leurs flancs d'une adresse fort gaye,
En trois tours de foret faisoient saigner la playe,
Puis à bouillons fumeux le faisoient doisiller
Louche dedans la tasse, et tombant petiller.
Les autres plus gaillards sur les grapes nouvelles
A deux piez s'affondroyent jusque sous les aisselles;
Les uns serroyent le marc, les autres pressuroyent;
Les uns pour vendanger sur la pierre esmouloyent
Le petit bec crochu de leurs mousses serpettes;
Les uns trempoyent l'osier, les autres leurs tinettes,
Leur hottes, leur estrain dedans les clairs ruisseaux;
Autres alloient raclant les costés des vaisseaux
De gravelle esmaillees, et de mousses couvertes,
Les autres leurs serroyent les levres entr'ouvertes
D'un cercle de peuplier, cordonné d'osiers francs,
Puis à coups de maillet leurs rebatoyent les flancs;
Les uns buvoyent au bord de la fumante gueule
Des cuves au grand ventre, autres tournoyent la meule,
Faisant craquer le grain et pleurer le raisin;
Puis sous l'arbre avale un grand torrent de vin
Rouloit dedans le met et d'une force estrange
Faisoyent geindre le bois et pleuvoir la vendange:

REMY BELLEAU

THE HARVESTERS

It was the time of year when all the rustic crew
Prepare to cut the vine, and cheerfully to hew
From off the sacred branch the luscious purpling grape.
It was the time of year when fruit of every shape
Widows the branch, and Autumn, ever fond of wine,
Fills high the foaming vats with clusters from the vine.
So each did set his hand to toil: here at the press,
Here stopping up the vat with jolly eagerness;
Here with a line of pitch, caulking with greatest care,
And sealing bungs and plugs; and others over there,
Rinsing out all the barrels; and some were on their knees,
Sharpening spigots and vent pegs to draw the wine with ease.
Some merrily pierce the sides with ancient rustic skill,
And soon from forth the wound the blood-red juices spill.
Then the heady bubbles begin to froth and spray
And cloud the drinking cup, and sparkle in the day.
Some other merry souls upon the new grapes leap,
And trample in the wine about their ankles deep;
Some squeeze the juicy marc, while others press it out.
Now some to gather grapes upon a grindstone stout
The bill-hooks of their blunted knives begin to whet.
Some soak the osiers through, others their strong hands set
On tubs and wicker baskets, and steep them in the stream;
Some the vessels scrape inside until they gleam,
Removing all the grit and moss which had grown there.
Others the task of closing the open firkins share,
And with a hoop of poplar and wickers bind them fast;
Then with many a blow they close them up at last.
Some drinking at the brim full soon you may discern,
Tasting the bigger vats; others the mill-wheel turn
That cracks and crushes grain, and makes the raisin weep,
Then underneath the tree it drinks wine long and deep,
Which rolls and pours far in, and with tremendous might
Makes all the forest groan, and wine to rain, strange sight!

Autres à dos panché entonnoient à plein scau
La bouillante liqueur de ce vin tout nouveau,
Autres alloient criant de leur puissance toute
Qu'au pied des seps tortus on fist la mere-goute,
Et chancelant de piez, de teste et de genoux
S'envyroient seulement au fumet des vins doux.

REMY BELLEAU

SONNET

LUNE porte-flambeau, seule fille heritiere
Des ombres de la nuit au grand et large sein,
Seule dedans le ciel qui de plus viste train
Gallopas tes moreaux par la noire carriere:

Seule quand il te plaist qui retiens ta lumiere
D'un œil à demi-clos, puis la versant soudain
Montres le teint vermeil de ton visage plein,
Et les rayons sacrez de ta belle paupiere:

Laisse moy, je te pry, sous le silence ombreux
De tes feux argentez au sejour amoureux
De ces rares beautez qui m'ont l'ame ravie,

Et causent que sans peur j'erre dedans ce bois
Vagabond et seulet, comme toy quelquefois
Pour ton mignon dormeur sur le mont de Latmie.

Others now lie flat and long the new wine quaff,
The heady bubbling liquid which they have soon drawn off;
Others, too, roam about, crying with maudlin shout
That neath the twisted vines is hidden mother-gout;
And lurching on their feet, with shaking heads and knees,
With never a drop of wine, they soon get drunk with ease.

· R E M Y B E L L E A U

S O N N E T

HIGH burning brand, bright moon, the only heir
Of all the darkest shades of pregnant night,
Alone across the sky in swiftest flight
Thy ebon steeds rush on in black career!

Thou art thyself's own mistress, and may'st peer
With half-closed lids, or sudden flood thy light,
Showing thy crimson cheek in splendour bright,
And all the rays that fringe thy lashes there.

Leave me, I pray, within thy shadowed peace,
Wherein mid silver fires I find release
Amid the loveliness that stole my heart;

And let me fearless wander through the glades
As thou dost seek thy darling mid the shades
On Latmos Hill in some sequestered part.

REMY BELLEAU

LA CERISE

MON Dieu, mon Dieu, quel plaisir est-ce,
Accompagné de sa maistresse,
Librement à l'ombre se voir
D'un cerisier, et de s'asseoir
Dessus l'herbe encor blondissante
D'une perlette rousoyante!
Et de main forte rabaisser
Une branche, pour luy laisser
Cueillir de sa levre tendrette
La cerise encore verdelette!

Puis après, de la mesme main,
Doucement decouvrir son sein,
Pour baiser la sienne jumelle
De sa ronde et blanche mamelle!
Puis luy dire en la baisotant,
La caressant, la mignottant:
"Cachez vostre beau sein mignonne! . . ."

GUY DE PIBRAC

FRAGMENT DU VOYAGE EN GASCOGNE : LE CHATEAU DE BARTAS

Le soleil ce pendant vers l'occident decline,
Plongeant son chef flambant au sein de la marine,
Et nos chevaux suants, du travail harassés,
En allongeant le col marchaient à pas forcés;

REMY BELLEAU

THE CHERRY

DEAR God, what joy it is to me
With my own mistress lovingly
To wander freely through the shade
Neath cherry trees within some glade,
And sit upon the yellow corn
In summertime at early morn,
And then to reach up overhead
To where the cherry branches spread,
That with her lips she pluck the fruit,
Hidden behind a fresh green shoot!

Then after, lying by her side,
Her bosom do I open wide
To kiss the cherry twins that rest
Upon her white and curving breast!
Then I caress and cherish her
And fondle her, and say to her:
"Cover thy breast, my dearest love!"

GUY DE PIBRAC

FRAGMENT FROM A VOYAGE IN GASCONY: BARTAS CASTLE

MEANWHILE the setting sun sinks down into the West,
Plunging his fiery head into the sea's broad breast;
And now, all bathed in sweat, our horses, tired with toil,
With eager necks outstretched, speed onward ever loyal.

Tellement que l'obscur de la nuit retournée,
Au chasteau de Bartas borna nostre journée,
Bartas où la nature et l'art industrieux
Semblent pour l'embellir avoir mis tout leur mieux.

Car la haute fustaie un bois icy s'esleve,
Dont l'ombre s'allongeant dans les douves s'abreve,
Où mille rossignols, branches en mille lieux,
Degoisent à l'envi leur chant melodieux.
Deça, le grand vivier, ainsi qu'une riviere,
Leche le pied des murs de son eau poissonniere,
Où le brochet, la carpe et mille autres poissons
Se pendent quand on veut aux croches hameçons.

Laissant là le vivier, un chemin vous amene
Soubs l'ombrage feuillu d'une epesse garene,
Où les clapiers voutés cachent dedans leurs creux,
Serpentes en canaux, mille connins poureux.
Là le clos du jardin est joint avec la vigne,
La vigne aux ceps pampres, qui, plantés à la ligne,
Estendent ça et là l'un sur l'autre les bras,
Que la grappe deja fait recourber en bas;
Et vigne que l'on tient, au goust du bon yvrongne,
Porter le meilleur vin de toute la Gascogne.

Mais que j'ay tort d'avoir, d'un vers mal ordonné,
Parlé premierement de l'enfant puisse-né
Que de l'eau qui sortant d'une claire fontaine
Embrasse en gargouillant le giron de la plaine;
Car d'elle je devoy parler premierement,
Pource que je ne boi que de son element.

Pour vous donques, fontaine, en m'excusant, je prie
Que jamais en este vostre eau ne soit tarie;
Que jamais le pasteur n'amene son troupeau
Pour l'abrever ches vous, souillant vostre belle eau;

And soon the darkening gloom of night come back again
Saw us at Bartas Castle, that was our journey's end:
Bartas which art and nature have diligently blessed
To render beautiful and give it of their best.

For here a forest stands with vast trees stretching high,
With shadows long and deep, and cool streams rippling by,
Where myriad nightingales a thousand places throng,
And pour forth as they will their sweet melodious song.
And there the teeming pool, like to some mighty stream,
Laps at the foot of the walls with many a liquid gleam,
Where pike and carp and fish of many a size and hue
Are caught on baited hook where they were bred and grew.

Leaving the teeming pool, you follow a winding way
Beneath the leafy shade to where the rabbits play,
In burrows and grassy hollows, hidden from human eye,
That twist and twine beneath, where mortals cannot pry.
There the garden close is hard beside the vine,
With all the growing plants neatly arrayed in line,
Reaching out here and there with branches intertwined,
Heavy with purple fruit and clusters half declined:
A drinking man would say this vine indeed is blessed,
Since in all Gascony the wine it bears is best.

But ill indeed I write, my verse is sore defiled,
That I should tell you first about the youngest child,
Forgetting quite the water which bubbles through the plain,
Springing from a clear fountain to greet the sky again:
For water should have been the first of all my themes,
Since I do only drink wine from the crystal streams.

So while I plead thy pardon, I pray, oh fountain dear,
That in hot summer ever flow thy water clear;
That never shepherd bring his flock beside thy bank
To water there and render all the pure stream rank;

Que des arbres voisins la feuille ne se seche,
Ains qu'à jamais vostre eau par leur ombre soit freche;
Que le bord qui vous ceint se maintienne couvert,
Soit l'hyver, soit l'este, d'un tapis toujours vert.

OLIVIER DE MAGNY

SONNET

SERVEZ bien longuement un seigneur aujourd'huy,
Despendez vostre bien à luy faire service,
Corrompez, en servant, la vertu pour le vice,
Et soiez attaché nuict et jour pres de luy;

Pour luy donner plaisir, donnez-vous de l'ennuy,
Sans nul respect à vous servez-le en tout office,
Adonnez-vous aux jeux dont il fait exercice,
Et ne demandez rien pour vous ny pour autrui.

Continuez long tens, pour quelque bien acquerre,
A le servir ainsi; puis, cassez quelque verre,
Ou faillez d'un seul mot, vous perdez vostre espoir.

Vous perdez vostre tens, vostre bien, vostre peine,
Et ne vous reste rien qu'une promesse vaine,
Et un vain souvenir d'avoir fait le devoir.

That ne'er the leaves dry up of these o'erhanging trees,
That so beneath their shade thou ever flow at ease;
That too the gentle verge, which covers thee beside,
May be year in year out, of freshest green and wide.

OLIVIER DE MAGNY

SONNET

ASSIDUOUSLY serve some lord of state,
Thy riches be to serve him loyally;
Change vice to virtue, so he look on thee;
By night and day constantly on him wait.

From pleasing him thy labours ne'er abate,
Discard respect and serve him slavishly;
Pursue the games he follows zealously,
Ask nothing for thyself though need be great.

Continue long with him, some fame acquire
In serving him; then, heedless, break a glass,
Let slip a word, and thou hast lost thy hire:

Then time and profit, labours, all are gone,
Nothing remains but empty hope, alas!
And memories of duty vainly done.

OLIVIER DE MAGNY

A S'AMIE

Vivons heureux, puis donc qu'il est ainsi
Qu'après la mort on peult encor aimer,
Et d'autant plus bienheureux s'estimer
Que moins on a de peine et de soucy.

Là-bas les soings, ne les mornes langueurs,
Ne les regretz, ne les soupçons hagards,
Les froides peurs, ne les traistres regards
Des vrais amans ne tourmentent les cœurs.

Ains tousjours gaiz, sous les ombrages mols,
D'un doux baiser asseurent l'amitié,
Et revivans l'une en l'autre moitié
D'un double bras s'entrelacent les cols . . .

Là, sont communs les biens plus précieux,
Là, sans travail, la terre les produit,
Et là jamais le manteau de la nuict
N'embrunit l'air ne la voute des cieux.

Les doux zephirs y ventent en tout temps,
Et les beaux prez toujours marquez de fleurs,
Et bigarrez de diverses couleurs,
Sentent le frais d'un eternal printemps.

Là, de nectar et de laict et de miel
Les ruisselets et les arbres sont pleins,
Et là jamais les peuples inhumains
Ingratement ne despitent le ciel . . .

OLIVIER DE MAGNY

TO HIS LOVE

LET us live happily, since this is so:
That we may go on loving after death;
We'll love still more, after our latest breath,
Since less of sorrow then we'll undergo.

No listless languor shall beset us there,
No sad regrets, suspicion's haggard thought,
No icy fears, nor treacherous looking sought,
But untormented hearts of lovers fair.

There all is joy beneath the pleasant shades,
And friendship reassured in one sweet kiss
As all the lovers, in immortal bliss,
Are interwoven with their lovely maids . . .

All riches there are common unto all;
There, without toil, the earth in fruit abounds,
And sombre Night the light air ne'er surrounds
In heaven's vault with all her sombre pall.

The gentle zephyrs breathe there all the day,
And fairest meadows, filled with fairest flowers,
And brightest colours mingling in the bowers
Do feel the freshness of eternal May.

Honey and milk and richly flowing wine
Are there in foison mid the streams and trees;
No men inhuman dwell there ill at ease,
Ungratefully to heaven to repine . . .

Là comme icy les ventz plus orgueilleux,
Soufflant aigu d'un gosier plein d'horreur,
N'emplissent l'air de gresle et de fureur,
Guidant les nefz aux escueils perilleux.

Là de l'este les ardentes chaleurs
Ne grillent point le jardin esmaillé
Et là l'yver n'a jamais despouillé
Foretz et champs de fueilles ne de fleurs . . .

Là nous irons, là nos douces amours
Doucettement ensemble conduyrans
Et d'un plaisir ensemble jouyrans,
D'un doux plaisir qui durera tousjours.

Donque la mort face hardiment sur moy
Ce qu'elle peult, j'aimeray constamment,
Et vif et mort en vous tant seulement
Vivra mon cœur, ma puissance et ma foy.

OLIVIER DE MAGNY

SONNET

BHENHEUREUX est celui qui, loin de la cité,
Vit librement aux champs dans son propre heritage,
Et qui conduit en paix le train de son menage,
Sans rechercher plus loin autre felicité.

There are no haughty winds that stormy blow
In shrill full-throated roar with horror pent,
And then hail forth with furious intent
To smash the ships on reefs concealed below.

There is no burning heat without cool showers
Scorches the plants and mercilessly broils;
There is no winter cruelly despoils
Forests and fields of all their leaves and flowers . . .

There shall we go, and there our loving sweet
Gently shall lead us thither two in one,
There to continue pleasure here begun,
That shall endure for aye though time be fleet.

So then though death assault me at this hour,
I yet shall love for ever and alway;
And dead or living love thee as I may,
With all my heart, my loyalty and power.

OLIVIER DE MAGNY

SONNET

BLESSED is he who far from city's press
Dwells freely in the fields to which he's heir,
His household rules with peace and justice fair,
And does not seek for other happiness.

Il ne sait que veut dire avoir nécessité,
Et n'a point d'autre soin que de son labourage,
Et si sa maison n'est pleine de grand ouvrage,
Aussi n'est-il greve de grande adversité.

Ores il ente un arbre, et ores il marie
Les vignes aux ormeaux, et ore en la prairie
Il debonde un ruisseau pour l'herbe en arroser:

Puis au soir il retourne et soupe à la chandelle
Avecques ses enfants et sa femme fidele,
Puis se chauffe ou devise et s'en va reposer.

ESTIENNE DE LA BOÉTIE

SONNET

C'ESTOIT alors, quand, les chaleurs passees,
Le sale automne aux cuves va foulant
Le raisin gras dessous le pied coulant,
Que mes douleurs furent encommencees.

Le paisan bat ses gerbes amassees,
Et aux caveaux ses bouillants muis roulant,
Et des fruitiers son automne croulant,
Se vange lors des peines avancees.

Seroit ce point un presage donné
Que mon espoir est desja moissonné?
Non, certes, non. Mais pour certain je pense,

He does not know the sense of neediness,
For daily tillage is his only care;
And though his house of luxuries is bare,
He suffers not adversity's duress.

Now does he graft a tree, and now does lead
The vines around the elms; now in the mead
Diverts a stream to water all the grass:

And then at nightfall home returns again
Beside his wife and children to remain;
Talks by the fire, and goes to rest at last.

ESTIENNE DE LA BOÉTIE

SONNET

It was the time when summer heats were passed,
And dreary autumn hasted to the press,
Treading the juicy grape with eagerness,
And all my sorrows came to me at last.

The peasant binds his sheaves together fast,
The cellars brim with bubbling fruitfulness,
And shaking down the trees with savageness
Anticipates the wintry trials forecast.

Might this not be an augury to me,
That all my hope is reaped infallibly?
No, by the gods! For I do hold it sure

J'auroy, si bien à deviner j'entends,
Si lon peult rien prognostiquer du temps,
Quelque grand fruict de ma longue esperance.

LES DAMES DES ROCHES

A MA QUENOUILLE

QUENOUILLE, mon soucy, je vous promets et jure
De vous aimer toujours, et jamais en changer
Vostre honneur domestic pour un bien estranger
Qui erre inconstamment et fort peu de temps dure.

Vous ayant au costé, je suis beaucoup plus sure
Que si encre et papier se venoient arranger
Tout à l'entour de moy: car, pour me revenger,
Vous pouvez bien plustost repousser une injure.

Mais, quenouille, ma mie, il ne faut pas pourtant
Que, pour vous estimer, et pour vous aimer tant,
Je delaisse de tout ceste honneste coustume

D'escrire quelquefois: en écrivant ainsy,
J'ecris de vos valeurs, quenouille, mon soucy,
Ayant dedans la main le fuseau et la plume.

I shall enjoy, if I do read the signs,
If truth dwells ever in forewritten lines,
Brave fruits for what my longings now endure.

LES DAMES DES ROCHES

TO MY DISTAFF

DISTAFF, my pride and care, I vow to thee
That I shall love thee ever nor exchange
Thy homely virtue for a pleasure strange,
Which would not last but stray inconstantly.

With thee beside I feel more tranquilly
Than if my ink and paper now should range
Themselves about me, since thou in revenge
Couldst all too well repulse an injury.

And yet, dear distaff, it doth not behove
That I to prove to thee my faithful love
Should set aside this honest task of mine:

For when I write, then can I write of thee,
Write of thy worth and parts full faithfully—
Spindle in hand, this is my whole design.

ESTIENNE JODELLE

SONNET

COMME un qui s'est perdu dans la forest profonde
Loing de chemin, d'oree, et d'adresse, et de gens;
Comme un qui en la mer, grosse d'horribles vens,
Se voit presque engloutir des grans vagues de l'onde:

Comme un qui erre aux champs, lorsque la nuict au monde
Ravit toute clarte, j'avois perdu long temps
Voye, route et lumiere, et presque avec le sens
Perdu long temps l'object, où plus mon heur se fonde.

Mais quand on voit (ayant ces maux fini leur tour)
Aux bois, en mer, aux champs, le bout, le port, le jour,
Ce bien present plus grand que son mal on vient croire:

Moy donc qui ay tout tel en vostre absence este,
J'oublie en revoyant vostre heureuse clarte,
Forest, tourmente et nuict, longue, orageuse et noire.

ESTIENNE JODELLE

SONNET

J'AIME le verd laurier, dont l'hyver ny la glace
N'effacent la verueur, en tout victorieuse,
Monstrant l'eternite à jamais bien heureuse,
Que le temps, ny la mort ne change ny efface.

ESTIENNE JODELLE

SONNET

As one far lost within a woodland deep,
Far from the wayside or the verge of men;
As one at sea when winds their strength unpen
And with huge waves would bear him down to sleep;

As one in meadows when the night doth reap
All brilliance from the world, so was I then,
Without way, path, or light, as in some den,
The goal forgot where I my fortune keep.

But when one sees, when all the ills are past,
In wood, sea, fields, light, haven, day at last,
Then present weal than woe doth show more might:

*So I, when you have absent been from me,
Forget, when I your radiance do see,
The black, long, stormy woodland of the night.*

ESTIENNE JODELLE

SONNET

I LOVE the green laurel which winter's cold embrace
Leaves green as ever in joyous victory,
Showing true happiness to eternity,
That neither death nor time can e'er efface.

J'aime du houx aussi la tousjours verte face,
Les poignans efuillons de sa fueille espineuse;
J'aime le lierre aussi et sa branche amoureuse
Qui le chesne où le mur estroitement embrasse.

J'aime bien tous ces trois, qui tousjours verds ressemblent
Aux pensers immortels, qui dedans moy s'assemblent,
De toi que nuict et jour j'idolatre, j'adore:

Mais ma playe, et poincture et le nœu qui me serre
Est plus verte, et poignante, et plus estroit encore
Que n'est le verd laurier, ny le houx, ny le lierre.

JEAN PASSERAT

CONTRE LES ALLEMANDS

EMPISTOLÉS au visage noirci,
Diables du Rhin, n'approchez point d'ici:
C'est le sejour des Filles de Memoire.
Je vous conjure en lisant le grimoire;
De par Bacchus, dont suivez les guidons,
Qu'alliez ailleurs combattre les pardons.
Volez ailleurs, Messieurs les heretiques:
Icy n'y a ne chappes ne reliques.
Les oiseaux peints vous disent en leurs chants:
Retirez vous, ne touchez à ces champs;
À Mars n'est point ceste terre sacree,
Ains à Phoebus qui souvent s'y recree.
N'y gastez rien et ne vous y jouez:

I love the holly, too, with her green face
And little leaves that hem her thornily;
I love the ivy, too, who lovingly
Her arms about the oak doth warmly place.

I love all three of them, who, ever green,
Are like immortal thoughts that I have seen
Around thy image that I idolise;

And yet the wound, the knot that hurts me sore,
Is greener still, more everlasting, more
Than all these plants with green that never dies.

JEAN PASSERAT

AGAINST THE GERMANS

YE black-faced warriors, come not near!
Ye Rhenish fiends, approach not here!
This is the day of Memory.
By all the spells of the gramarye
Conjure I you; by Bacchus, too,
Whose steps ye dog: begone with you!
Heretic Sirs, away elsewhere!
No relics have we here to spare:
Even the birds do sing their song,
"Come not within these meadows long!"
To Mars this land's not dedicate,
For Phoebus sports here with his mate.
Waste not efforts, and nothing lose:

Tous vos chevaux deviendroient encloués ;
Vos chariots, sans aisseuils et sans roues,
Demeureroient versés parmi les boues.
Encore un coup, sans espoir de retour,
Vous trouveriez le Roi à Montcontour,
Ou maudiriez vostre folle entreprise,
Rassiegeans Mets gardé du duc de Guyse :
Et en fuyant, batus et desarmés,
Boiriez de l'eau que si peu vous aimez.
Gardez vous donc d'entrer en ceste terre :
Ainsi jamais ne vous faille la guerre ;
Ainsi jamais ne laissiez en repos
Le porc sallé, les verres et les pots :
Ainsi tousjours rouliez-vous soubz la table,
Ainsi tousjours couchiez-vous à l'estable,
Vaincueurs de soif, et vaincus de sommeil,
Ensevelis en vin blanc et vermeil,
Sales et nuds, veautrés dedans quelque auge,
Comme un sanglier qui se souille en sa bauge.
Bref tous souhaits vous puissent advenir,
Fors seulement d'en France revenir,
Qui n'a besoin, o estourneaux etranges,
De votre main à faire ses vendanges.

JEAN PASSERAT

CONTRE LES ESPAGNOLS

MAIS où est maintenant ceste puissante armee,
Qui sembloit en venant tous les dieux menacer ?
Et qui se promettoit de rompre et terrasser
La noblesse françoise avec son prince armee ?

All your horses would cast their shoes,
Your chariots, stripped of every wheel,
In sodden mud would lurch and reel.
There would be no escape, be sure!
The King you would find at Moncontour,
And you would curse your enterprise
At Metz, which is held by the Duc de Guise;
Fleeing, disordered and weaponless,
You would drink of the water of bitterness.
Do not drink of the streams of this plain:
So you will never make war again;
And thirsty, you would never rest,
But have for salted pork a zest,
And drink yourselves beneath the table,
And sluggish sleep in filthy stable:
Conquering thirst, conquered by sleep,
In red and white wine buried deep;
Then stark and dirty in a trough,
Like boars rooting muddily off.
In fine, all wishes be your lot,
So that French soil you never blot;
She doth not need, oh Foreigners rare,
Your hands to reap her vineyards fair.

JEAN PASSERAT

AGAINST THE SPANIARDS

But where is now this army, mighty force,
Which when it came did seem to threat the skies?
And which proclaimed that it would seize the prize
Of France, her nobles smashed and all their horse?

Ce superbe appareil s'en retourne en fumee,
Et ce duc, qui pensoit tout le monde embraser,
Est contraint, sans rien faire, en Flandre rebrosser;
Il a perdu ses gens, son temps, sa renommee.

Henri, nostre grand roy, comme un veneur le suit,
Le presse, le talonne; et le renard s'enfuit,
Le menton contre terre, honteux, despit et blesme.

Espagnols, apprenez que jamais estranger
N'attaque le François qu'avec perte et danger:
Le François ne se vaint que par le François mesme.

JEAN PASSERAT

ESTRENNES A MADAME DE ROISSY

L'AN recommence sa carriere,
Vous aussi vos devotions.
Quelle sera vostre priere,
Seule remede aux afflictions?

Prier pour la paix c'est offense;
Au moins on nous l'a deffendu.
Sans outrepasser la deffense
Le contraire soit entendu.

Madame, priez pour la guerre,
(Il ne faut que de nom changer).
Qu'elle aille loin de ceste terre
Et retourne chez l'estranger.

This wondrous engine took a backward course,
This duke, who viewed the world with haughty eyes,
In Flanders is constrained, and all despise;
His time and fame are wasted, and his force.

Like any hunter, Henry, our great king,
Hard on him presseth; then the fox doth spring
To wary flight, his head hung down in shame.

Learn, Spaniards, that an alien never dare
Wage war in France, but loses honour there:
The French will only bow to France's name.

JEAN PASSERAT

NEW YEAR'S GIFTS TO MADAME DE ROISSY

THE year begins his course again
And you once more resume your prayers.
And what is your orison, then,
The only cure for all our cares?

It is not right to pray for peace,
This is forbidden, for our good:
Therefore, I say, we should not cease
To pray for what's not understood.

Pray then, my Lady, pray for war
(You only have to change the name),
That it depart far from our shore
And into foreign lands may flame.

Ainsi là France resjouye
Reverra meilleure saison.
Priez, et vous serez ouye,
Car Dieu oyt des bons l'oraison.

ROBERT GARNIER

LES JUIVES : CHŒUR

PAUVRES filles de Sion,
Vos liesses sont passees,
La commune affliction
Les a toutes effacees.

Ne luiront plus vos habits
De soye avec l'or tissue,
La perle avec le rubis
N'y sera plus apperceue.

La chaisne qui devaloit
Sur vos gorges ivoirines,
Jamais, comme elle souloit,
N'embellira vos poitrines.

Vos seins, des cedres plorans
En mainte larme tombee
Ne seront plus odorans
Ni des parfums de Sabee;

So shall our fairest France rejoice,
And know no more this pain and care;
Pray so, and God shall hear your voice
For He doth heed good people's prayer.

ROBERT GARNIER

THE JEWESSES: CHORUS

POOR daughters of Zion,
Your joys are all sped,
The common affliction
Hath all your joys shed.

Your dresses will never
Again shine with gold,
With pearls and with rubies
So rich to behold.

The chains which encircled
Your necks smooth and white,
Shall never again on
Your throats shine so bright.

Your breasts mourning cedars
In many a tear
Shall not be more fragrant
Than scents of Sabæa.

Et vos visages deteints
De leur naturel albatre
N'auront souci que leurs teints
Soyent peinturez de cinabre.

L'or crespé de vos cheveux,
Qui sur vos tempes se joue,
De mille folastres nœux
N'ombragera vostre joue.

Nous n'entendrons plus les sons
De la soupireuse lyre,
Qui s'accordoit aux chansons
Que l'Amour vous faisoit dire:

Quand les cuisantes ardeurs
Du jour estant retirees,
On dansoit sous les tiedeurs
Des brunissantes soirees . . .

Las! que tout est bien changé!
Nous n'avons plus que tristesse,
Tout plaisir s'est estrangé
De nous, et toute liesse.

Notre orgueilleuse cité,
Qui les cités de la terre
Passeoit en felicité,
N'est plus qu'un monceau de pierre.

De tous ses murs demolis,
Comme en commun cimetere,
Demeurent ensevelis
La plus grand'part de ses freres.

Alabaster whiteness
That made you so fair
Will cinnabar need not
To be your sole care.

The gold of your tresses
That plays on your brows
Will not in mad ringlets
O'ershadow your cheeks.

No more shall we hear then
The soft sighing lyre
Beneath the sweet singing
Which love did inspire:

"When the ardours of daytime
"Had left the quiet day
"We danced, in the coolness,
"The twilight away . . .

"But all this is gone now
"And sadness remains,
"Pleasure is strange to us,
"Sorrow our pains.

"Of all our proud city
"That others surpassed
"In joy and in gladness, .
"No stone stands at last.

"Beneath her walls crumbled,
"Ensepulchred there,
"Are most of the brothers
"We loved with fond care.

Et nous, malheureux butin,
Allons soupirer captives,
Bien loin dessous le matin,
Sur l'Euphrate aux creuses rives . . .

VAUQUELIN DE LA FRESNAYE

SONNET

Du paresseux sommeil où tu gis endormie
Desja par si long temps, o France, eveille-toy,
Respire dedaigneuse, et tes offences voy,
Ne sois point ton esclave et ta propre ennemie.

Reprend ta liberté, gueri ta maladie,
Et ton antique honneur, o France, ramentoy:
Legere, desormais, sans bien sçavoir pourquoy,
Dans un sentier tortu ne donne à l'estourdie.

Si tu regardois bien les annales des rois,
Tu connoistrois avoir triomphé mille fois
De ceux qui veulent or amoindrir ta puissance.

Sans toy, qui contre toy despite ouvre le sein,
Ces ventres de harpie, ejunez par souffrance,
N'auroient jamais osé passer le Rhin germain.

"And we, luckless booty,
"Are captive borne off,
"Adown the Euphrates,
"While conquerors scoff . . ."

VAUQUELIN DE LA FRESNAYE

SONNET

FROM idle sleep where thou hast lain so long
In deepest slumber, wake again, oh France!
Breathe proudly in! Behold the evil chance
That has made thee thy slave and enemy strong!

Take up thy liberty! No ills belong
To thy old honour! Find thyself, oh France!
Thou hast been long in thoughtless dalliance
Beside the crooked way that leads to wrong!

If thou wouldst read the chronicles of kings,
Thouldst read of victories in myriad things
When thou didst vanquish those who sought thy power!

These hostile hordes, without consent of thine
Would not have coveted thy ailing dower,
Nor ever dared to cross the German Rhine!

CHANSON

Nous sommes filles de village,
Les plus belles du voisinage,
Qui fuyons des gros villageois
Les amours lourds et malcourtois . . .

Ici l'or, les lis et les roses,
La nature les a decloses,
Et les a mises de ses mains
A nos beaux chefs, à nos beaux seins.

Des le matin une fontaine,
Ou de rousee une main pleine,
Nous lave et relave les yeux,
La face et le front gracieux.

Nos beautez ne sont augmentees
Par quelques couleurs empruntees,
Nous n'usons en nostre resveil
Ni de blanc fard, ni de vermeil:

Car nostre beaute naturelle
Par dessus tous les fards excelle,
Et fait que l'aurore palit
En nous voyant sortir du lit . . .

SONG

LOWLY village maids are we,
The fairest hereabouts to see,
From village lads we run away
When boorishly at love they play . . .

Here are gold, and lilies, roses
Nature to us all discloses
And with her hands ourselves has dressed
Each lovely head, each lovely breast.

At early morn beside a spring
Hands filled with dew does Nature bring,
To rinse again our sleepy eyes,
Each face and brow where beauty lies.

Our fairness knows no pigment stain
Of borrowed colours false and vain;
We do not paint when we arise;
Cream and crimson we despise:

Our own unaided loveliness
No cream or powder does possess,
And very Dawn shines forth less bright
When we from virgin beds alight . . .

L'ALLEGORIE

COMME en la vigne on void, dessous la feuille verte,
 La grappe cramoisie et de pampre couverte
 Se desrober aux yeux: ainsi sous les discours
 D'un conte poetique, et parmi les amours
 Des heros et des dieux, entremeslés de fables,
 Sont des enseignemens feconds et profitables.
 Souvent nous nous plaisons aux parfums, aux couleurs,
 Sans chercher les vertus des odorantes fleurs.
 L'abeille toutesfois, ouvriere sacree,
 En tire la liqueur dont son œuvre est sucee;
 De mesme on void plusieurs s'abuser aux beautes
 Des paroles qui sont pleines de nouveautes;
 Mais d'autres, n'arrestant à ces formes fleuries,
 Recueillent le beau sens voilé d'allegories.
 De feuillage d'acante et de plaisans festons
 Les Muses cachent l'or des vers que nous chantons.

SCEVOLE DE SAINTE-MARTHE

VŒUX D'UN VIEILLARD

J'AY passé mon printemps, mon este, mon automne;
 Voicy le triste hyver qui vient finir mes vœux;
 Desja de mille vents le cerveau me bouillonne.
 J'ay la pluye en la bouche et la neige aux cheveux.

VAUQUELIN DE LA FRESNAYE

ALLEGORY

Just as beneath the green leaf of the vine
The crimson grape, where fresh shoots intertwine,
Is hidden from the eyes: so in the thread
Of high poetic tales where much is said
Of classic loves, mingled within the speech,
Are profitable words that wisdom teach.
Ofttimes we love to spend bright fragrant hours,
But do not seek the virtues in the flowers;
Yet like some holy acolyte the bee
Draws but their sweetest essence fruitfully.
Thus many men the beauty only see
Of written words all wrapped in novelty;
But others, when they have the forms revealed,
Do gather in the moral there concealed:
The Muses in acanthus do enfold
The meaning of our songs, their hidden gold.

SCEVOLE DE SAINTE-MARTHE

AN OLD MAN'S WISH

My spring, my summer and autumn are now all sped;
Sad winter comes to end my last desire;
Already myriad winds beset my head,
Rain to my mouth, snow to my hair aspire.

D'un pas douteux et lent à trois pieds je chemine,
Appuyant d'un baston mes membres languissans,
Mes reins n'en peuvent plus, et ma debile eschine
Se courbe peu à peu sous le fais de mes ans.

Une morne froideur sur mes nerfs espanchee
Engourdist tous mes sens, desormais ocieux;
D'un glaçon endurcy j'ay l'oreille bouchée,
Et porte en un estuy la force de mes yeux.

Mais, bien que la jeunesse en moy ne continue,
Pour tout ce changement je n'ai perdu le cœur;
Autant que de mon sang la force diminue,
Autant de mon esprit s'augmente la vigueur.

Que sert de prolonger une ingrate vieillesse
Pour regarder sans fruit la lumiere du jour?
Heureux qui, sans languir en si longue vieillesse,
Retourne de bonne heure au celeste séjour!

Adieu l'honneur mondain, qui les jeunes enyvre,
Adieu toute richesse et tous ebatement; ;
Apprendre à bien mourir, afin de mieux revivre,
C'est desormais le but de mes contentemens.

Three-footedly I tread my faltering way,
My weary limbs upon a staff I lean;
My kidneys can no more, and, day by day,
My spine is bent from years that there have been.

A dreary coldness through my nerves has spread,
Benumbing every sense to idleness;
An icy hardness makes all hearing dead,
Unspectacled my eyes know sightlessness.

But though my youth can dwell no more in me,
Despite this changing, heart I have not lost:
Just as my blood grows weaker momentarily,
So is my spirit with new vigour crossed.

Why should a thankless age be thus eked out
To see the fruitless light of day again?
Happy are those who linger not about,
But swift return to Heaven's own domain!

Farewell worldly honour, prized by youth!
Farewell riches, revels freely spent!
Learn to die well and live again in truth:
This is the goal I seek with just content.

CH A N S O N

ESTANT couché pres les ruchettes
Où faisoient du miel les avettes,
En ces mots je vins à parler:
“Mouches, vous volez à vostre aise,
“Et ma maistresse est si mauvaise
“Qu’elle m’empesche de voler.

“Vous volez sur les fleurs escluses,
“Et moissonnez les douces choses
“Du thym, du safran rougissant,
“Et du saule a la feuille molle;”
Mais sur les moissons je ne vole,
Dont j’aime à estre jouissant.

“Mouches, de Jupiter nourrices,
“Des odeurs qui vous sont propices
“Vous faites la cire et le miel;”
Et moy, des beautez de ma dame,
Je ne produis rien en mon ame,
Que plaintes, que deuil et que fiel.

“On dit, o coleres abeilles,
“Qu’en vos peintures nonpareilles
“Vostre destin se voit borné;”
Mais celle dont les traits je porte,
Las! en me blessant n’est point morte
De la mort qu’elle m’a donné.

Ha! je voudrois estre une mouche,
Pour voleter dessus la bouche,
Sur les cheveux et sur le sein
De ma dame belle et rebelle;
Je picquerois ceste cruelle
A peine d’y mourir soudain.

AMADIS JAMYN

SONG

BESIDE the hives as once I lay,
Watching the honey-bees at play,
I said to them complainingly:
"Flies, you at your ease may fly;
"My mistress is so stern that I
"May never fly, but here must be.

"You fly from open flower to flower,
"Harvesting sweets from every bower,
"Thyme and saffron redly dyed,
"Softest leaf of willow tree . . ."
But harvesting is not for me,
When I would joy me at her side.

"Flies, who Jove himself have fed,
"On all fair fragrance nourished,
"You tapers make, and honey too . . ."
And I who thrive upon my love
Within my spirit nothing prove,
But bitterness and sorrow true.

"They say, O angry tempered bees,
"That when your stings you once release,
"Then it must be your latest breath . . ."
But she whose shafts have pierced me,
Alas! though wounding mortally
Upon the archer brought not death.

Ah! Would that I might be a fly,
To pass the idle moments by
Upon the hair, the lovely breast
Of her whose loveliness I sing:
Then this fair cruelty would I sting,
Though I did find unending rest!

MARIE STUART

ADIEU A LA FRANCE

*Vers écrits en vue des côtes de France
sur le vaisseau qui conduisait la Reine en Ecosse.*

ADIEU, plaisant pays de France,
O ma patrie
La plus chérie,
Qui as nourri ma jeune enfance;
Adieu, France! adieu, mes beaux jours!
La nef qui disjoint nos amours
N'a cy de moi que la moitié;
Une part te reste, elle est tienne.
Je la fie à ton amitié
Pour que de l'autre il te souvienne.

GUILLAUME DU BARTAS

LE CHEVAL

Ses paturons sont courts, ni trop droicts, ni luez;
Ses bras secs et nerveus, ses genoux descharnez.
Il a jambe de cerf, ouverte la poitrine,
Large croupe, grand corps, flancs unis, double eschine,
Col mollement vousté comme un arc my tendu,
Sur qui flotte un long poil crespement espandu,
Yeux gros, prompts, relevés, bouche grande, escumeuse,
Naseau qui ronfle, ouvert, une chaleur fumeuse . . .
Son pas est libre et grand; son trot semble egaler
Le tigre en la campagne et l'arondelle en l'er:

MARIE STUART

FAREWELL TO FRANCE

*Lines composed on board the ship
which bore the Queen to Scotland.*

FAREWELL, O fairest country without peers,
My own sweet land,
Where I did stand,
Walk, run, and spend my childish years!
Farewell my France! Farewell my fairest days!
The vessel, which our heart-torn love displays,
Hath but the half of me:
One part remains, and that is ever thine;
I leave it willingly,
That thou so having may remember mine.

GUILLAUME DU BARTAS

THE HORSE

SHORT are his pasterns, not too straight nor bent;
Dry, sinewed limbs, and knees to flesh unlent.
His legs as light as stag's, an open chest,
Broad croup, a powerful frame, a double crest,
A curving neck bent like a half-strung bow
Whereon a lengthy mane doth waving flow,
A big frothed mouth, and eyes alert that gleam,
Broad nostrils open wide, a mist of steam . . .
His pace is long and free, and everywhere
He trots as lightly as a bird on air:

Et son brave galop ne semble pas moins viste
Que le dard biscaïn ou le traict moscovite.
Mais le fameux canon, de son gosier bruyant,
Si roide ne vomit le boulet foudroyant,
Qui va d'un rang entier esclaircir une armee
Ou percer le rempart d'une ville sommee,
Que ce fougueux cheval, sentant lascher son frein
Et piquer ses deux flancs, part viste de la main,
Desbande tous ses nerfs, à soi mesmes eschappe,
Le champ plat bat, abat; destrappe, grappe, attrape
Le vent qui va devant; couvert de tourbillons
Escroule sous ses pieds les bluetans sillons,
Fait descroistre la plaine, et, ne pouvant plus estre
Suivi de l'œil, se perd dans la nuë champestre.

JEAN DE LA CÉPPÈDE

SONNET

LES escadrons aislez du celeste pourpris
Par le Pere choisis des bandes Coronelles,
Jaloux d'executer les charges paternelles
Accompagnent le Fils au voyage entrepris.

Approchans les cachots des rebelles esprits
Ils vont criant aux Roys des ombres criminelles:
"Ouvrez à ce grand Roy vos portes eternelles,
"Puisqu'il a rançonné les siens à si grand prix.

His gallop bold less swift could never be
Than Biscayan dart or shaft of Muscovy.
The famous cannon that with mighty roar
More swiftly flaming balls doth not outpour
(Which easily a line of men strikes down,
Or shatters through the ramparts of a town),
Than this high-spirited steed that with bit free,
Pricked on by spurs, flies forth incredibly;
His nerves set loose, himself he soon outspeeds,
Flees over leas, and forthwith overleads
The wind that went before; in dust clouds dressed
On downcrushed furrows hurried hooves impressed,
Then the whole plain outstrips from human eye,
Lost in the country air of field and sky . . .

JEAN DE LA CEPPÈDE

SONNET

THE pinioned squadrons of the crimson sky
Chosen by the Father from the heavenly host,
Eager to do his bidding, hasting post
Beside the Son, and with him downward fly.

They near the dens where rebels spirits lie,
And cry out to the Kings of this bad host:
"Open your deathless doors to King and Ghost,
"Since for His own He paid such ransom high!

"C'est le Roy de la Gloire, il faut, il faut qu'il entre":
Tout l'Averne croulant du comble jusqu'au centre,
Troublé respond: "Quel est ce Prince glorieux?"

"C'est le Seigneur très fort," repliquent les bons Anges,
"Tres-puissant au combat, toujours victorieux,
"Dont les Cieux et la terre annoncent les louanges."

JEAN DE LA CEPPÈDE

SONNET

BLANC est le vestement du grand Pere sans age,
Blancs sont les courtisans de sa blanche maison,
Blanc est de son esprit l'étincelant pennage,
Blanche est de son Agneau la brillante toison.

Blanc est le cresse saint dont (pour son cher blason)
Aux Noces de l'Agneau l'Espouse s'avantage;
Blanc est or' le manteau, dont par mesme raison
Cet innocent Espous se pare en son Nopçage.

Blanc estoit l'ornement dont le Pontife vieux
S'affeubloit pour devot offrir ses vœux aux cieux;
Blanc est le parement de ce nouveau grand Prestre.

Blanche est la robe due au fort victorieux:
Ce vainqueur (bien qu'il aille à la mort se souzmettre)
Blanc sur la dure mort triomphe glorieux.

"He must, the glorious King, must enter here!"
Then all Avernus trembled with mighty fear,
And answer gave: "Who is this Prince so glorious?"

"This is the Lord of might," the Angels say,
"Most powerful He in battle, ever victorious,
"Whom Heaven and earth do praise both night and day."

JEAN DE LA CEPPÈDE

SONNET

WHITE is the raiment of the ageless Sire,
White are the courtiers of his mansion white,
White is the plumage of his spirit's fire,
White is the fleece of his Lamb with brilliant light.

White is the holy veil of noble right
Wherewith the Bride herself doth now attire;
White too the mantle with a radiance bright
The innocent Bridegroom dons for the Nuptial fire.

White the adornment of the Pontiff old
That he put on to praise the Heavens gold;
White is the ornament of the new Priest.

White is the garment due to the victor bold:
The conqueror (who goeth to death's last feast)
Whitely o'er death his glory doth unfold.

PHILIPPE DESPORTES

SONNET

Pourquoy si follement croyez-vous à un verre,
Voulant voir les beautez que vous avez des cieux?
Mirez-vous dessus moy pour les connoistre mieux,
Et voyez de quels traits vostre bel œil m'enferme.

Un vieux chesne ou un pin, renversez countre terre,
Monstrent combien le vent est grand et furieux:
Aussi vous connoistrez le pouvoir de vos yeux,
Voyant par quels efforts vous me faites la guerre.

Ma mort de vos beautez vous doit bien assurer,
Joint que vous ne pouvez sans peril vous mirer :
Narcisse devint fleur d'avoir veu sa figure.

Craignez doncques, madame, un semblable danger,
Non de devenir fleur, mais de vous voir changer,
Par vostre œil de Meduse, en quelque roche dure.

PHILIPPE DESPORTES

SONNET : A ICARE

ICARE est cheut ici, le jeune audacieux,
Qui pour voler au ciel eut assez de courage:
Ici tomba son corps degarni de plumage,
Laissant tous braves cœurs de sa chute envieux.

PHILIPPE DESPORTES

SONNET

WHY trust you to a glass so foolishly,
Striving to see your sky-born loveliness?
Unto myself your questing eyes address,
And see me pierced by your fair cruelty.

An aged oak or pine when utterly
Brought low displays the wind's full mightiness:
So viewing me, your own eyes' deadliness
You may behold, who wreak your war on me.

My death must soon persuade you of your charm,
Yet you may not behold it without harm:
Narcissus was transformed for vanity.

Beware, my Lady, lest this come to you,
That as chastisement you be changed anew
To harshest stone for Gorgon cruelty.

PHILIPPE DESPORTES

SONNET: TO ICARUS

HERE did Icarus fall, the hardy youth,
Who in his might to fly the heavens did dare;
Here fell his body now of all plumage bare,
And filled all other hearts with envious ruth.

O bienheureux travail d'un esprit glorieux,
Qui tire un si grand gain d'un si petit dommage!
O bienheureux malheur plein de tant d'avantage,
Qu'il rende le vaincu des ans victorieux!

Un chemin si nouveau n'etonna sa jeunesse,
Le pouvoir lui faillit, mais non la hardiesse;
Il eut pour le bruler des astres le plus beau;

Il mourut poursuivant une haute aventure;
Le ciel fut son desir, la mer sa sepulture:
Est-il plus beau dessein, ou plus riche tombeau?

PHILIPPE DESPORTES

CHANSON

Las! que nous sommes misérables
D'être servés dessous les lois
Des hommes légers et muables
Plus que le feuillage des bois!

Les pensers des hommes ressemblent
À l'air, aux vents et aux saisons,
Et aux girouettes qui tremblent
Inconstamment sur les maisons.

Leur amour est ferme et constante
Comme la mer grosse de flots,
Qui bruit, qui court, qui se tourmente,
Et jamais n'arrête en repos.

O blessèd toil of spirit steeped in truth,
Who for such loss such wondrous pains can spare!
O blest misfortune full of profit rare,
Which final triumph gave to conquered youth!

Undaunted by new ways, his youthfulness
Lacked power, but lacked no whit of hardiness:
He had enough to burn the stars on high!

He died pursuing an adventurous fate,
The sky his goal, the sea his burial state:
What richer tomb is there beneath the sky?

PHILIPPE DESPORTES

SONG

ALAS! Are we not wretched, then,
That serve the laws so slavishly
Of these inconstant, fickle men
That like high leaves shift ceaselessly?

The thoughts of men that meditate
Are like the seasons, wind and air,
Like weather vanes that light gyrate
Over the houses with restless care.

Their love as constant is and firm
As are the surging waves of sea,
That roar and run and know no term
But are tormented endlessly.

Ce n'est que vent que de leur tete,
De vent est leur entendement;
Les vents encor et la tempete
Ne vont point si legerement.

Ces soupirs, qui sortent sans peine
De leur estomac si souvent,
N'est-ce une preuve assez certaine
Qu'au dedans ils n'ont que du vent?

Qui se fie en chose si vaine,
Il sème sans espoir de fruit,
Il veut bâtir dessus l'arene,
Ou sur la glace d'une nuit.

Ils font des dieux en leur pensee,
Qui comme eux ont l'esprit leger,
Se riant de la foi' faussee
Et de voir bien souvent changer.

Ceux qui peuvent mieux faire accroire
Et sont menteurs plus assurés
Entr'eux sont élevés en gloire,
Et sont comme dieux adorés.

Car ils prennent pour grand louange
Quand on les estime inconstants;
Et disent que le temps se change,
Et que le sage suit le temps.

Mais, las! qui ne serait 'eprise,
Quand on ne sait leurs fictions,
Lors qu'avec si grande feintise
Ils soupirent leurs passions?

In them no other will can be;
Yet winds tempestuous from the hill
Do not fly forth so violently.

Besides, these sighs which outwards spring
From mortal stomachs frequently,
Do you not think that this same thing
Is proof they store wind inwardly?

He who trusts in aught so vain
Sows where he never will delight,
Raises a castle up in Spain,
Or on the icy face of night.

They fashion gods in their own way,
As fickle as their spirits' range,
Laughing with all who faith unsay,
And at all the constant change.

Those who greatest wealth amass,
And therefore tell the greatest lies,
Are soon to glory raised, alas!
And godlike worshipped in the skies.

Unfaithfulness they take for praise
And deem inconstancy sublime,
And say, since Time has changed his ways,
A man of wisdom follows Time.

Indeed, who would not but admire
The false pretences they pass by,
When with such artful feigned fire
Their passions to the world they sigh?

De leur cœur sort-une fournaise,
Leurs yeux sont deux ruisseaux coulants,
Ce n'est que feu, ce n'est que braise,
Meme leurs propos sont brulants.

Mais cet ardent feu qui les tue
Et rend leur esprit consommé,
C'est un feu de paille menue,
Aussitot eteint qu'allumé.

Et les torrents qu'on voit descendre
Pour notre douceur emouvoir,
Ce sont des appas à surprendre
Celles qu'ils veulent decevoir.

Aisi l'oiseleur au bocage
Prend les oiseaux par ses chansons,
Et le pecheur sur le rivage
Tend ses filets pour les poissons.

Sommes-nous donc pas miserables
D'etre serves dessous les lois
Des hommes legers et muables
Plus que le feuillage des bois?

From out each heart a furnace flows,
Their eyes like rivers twist and turn,
But all is fire that hotly glows,
And what they plan will ever burn.

And yet this fire which burns them raw,
Leaving each spirit void of day,
Is but a fire of shredded straw
No sooner lit than flamed away.

And these swift torrents which descend,
That should our gentleness relieve,
Do but in thwarted longing end,
Surprising those they would deceive.

So does fowler in woodland glade
Snare the fledglings with soft song,
And fishermen on banks displayed
Within their nets draw fish along.

We must indeed be wretched, then,
Who serve the laws so slavishly
Of these inconstant, fickle men
That like high leaves shift ceaselessly!

CHANSON

O BIENHEUREUX qui peut passer sa vie
Entre les siens, franc de haine et d'envie,
Parmy les champs, les forests et les bois,
Loin du tumulte et du bruit populaire,
Et qui ne vend sa liberte pour plaire
Aux passions des princes et des rois!

Il n'a soucy d'une chose incertaine,
Il ne se paist d'une esperance vaine,
Nulle faveur ne le va decevant;
De cent fureurs il n'a l'ame embrasee,
Et ne maudit sa jeunesse abusee,
Quand il ne trouve à la fin que du vent.

Il ne fremist quand la mer courroucee
Enfle ses flots, contrairement poussee
Des vens esmeus soufflans horriblement;
Et quand la nuict à son aise il sommeille,
Une trompette en sursaut ne l'esveille
Pour l'envoyer du lict au monument.

L'ambition son courage n'attise,
D'un fard trompeur son ame il ne deguise,
Il ne se plaist à violer sa foy;
Des grands seigneurs l'oreille il n'importune,
Mais en vivant content de sa fortune,
Il est sa cour, sa faveur et son roy.

Je vous rens grace, o deitez sacrees
Des monts, des eaux, des forests et des prees,
Qui me privez de pensers soucieux,
Et qui rendez ma volonte contente,
Chassant bien loin la miserable attente,
Et les desirs des cœurs ambitieux!

SONG

HAPPY indeed is he who spends his life
Amongst his own, away from hate and strife,
Amid the trees and fields and woodland maze,
Far from the noise and tumult of the crowd;
Whose rightful freedom never need be cowed
By pandering to princes and their ways.

He is untroubled by uncertainties,
And is not fed on empty promises,
No courtier's favours deeve him with deceit,
Nor is his soul consumed by bitter ruth;
He does not have to curse a misspent youth,
When in the wind his life ends incomplete.

He has no fear when high the angry sea
Piles up her waves, and roaring terribly
The stormy winds assault her furiously;
But easefully he sleeps when night doth fall,
Nor wakens at the brazen trumpet's call
To leave his couch and fight with soldiery.

Ambition does not spur his spirit wise,
Nor does he hide his heart in tinsel guise;
He does not break his faith in anything,
Nor craves the ear of any mighty lord,
But lives content with all he can afford;
This is his court, his favour, and his king.

I render thanks to all those woodland fays
Who dwell in hills, and woods, and meadow ways,
And rid me of all thoughts of heavy care;
Who make me happy, set my spirit free,
And drive me far from waiting fearfully
On foolish hopes, ambitions vain and bare.

Dedans mes champs ma pensee est enclose.
Si mon corps dort, mon esprit se repose,
Un soin cruel ne le va devorant:
Au plus matin, la fraischeur me soulage,
S'il fait trop chaud, je me mets à l'ombrage,
Et s'il fait froid, je m'eschauffe en courant.

Si je me loge en ces maisons dorees,
Au front superbe, aux voutes peinturees
D'azur, d'esmail et de mille couleurs,
Mon œil se paist des tresors de la plaine
Riche d'œillets, de lis, de marjolaine,
Et du beau teint des printanieres fleurs.

Dans les palais enflez de vaine pompe,
L'ambition, la faveur qui nous trompe,
Et les soucis logent communement:
Dedans nos champs se retirent les fees,
Roines des bois à tresses decoiffees,
Les jeux, l'amour et le contentement.

Ainsi vivant, rien n'est qui ne m'agree.
J'oy des oiseaux la musique sacree,
Quand, au matin, ils benissent les cieux;
Et le doux son des bruyantes fontaines
Qui vont, coulant de ses roches hautaines,
Pour arrouser nos prez delicieux . . .

Douces brebis, mes fidelles compaignes,
Hayes, buissons, forests, prez et montagnes,
Soyez temoins de mon contentement:
Et vous, o dieux! faites, je vous supplie,
Que, cependant que durera ma vie,
Je ne connoisse un autre changement.

Within my meadows are my thoughts confined
And when my body sleeps, then rests my mind.
No cruel troubles in my tired head swarm;
At early morn the coolness comforts me:
If 'tis too warm, I sit beneath a tree,
And if too cold, I run and soon am warm.

When I do lodge in some bright gilded home
With haughty front and ceilings painted chrome
And blue enamel, and a thousand hues,
My eyes seek out the riches of the field,
Lilies, pinks, and marjoram, the yield
Of early spring, with fairest greens and blues.

In these fine palaces puffed up with show,
Envy and guileful favour daily grow
With cares and troubles which beset us there;
But in the meadows fairies hold their court,
And untressed woodland queens are wont to sport
With love and happiness their only care.

When I live thus, then everything I love:
I hear the singing of the birds above
When at the break of day they bless the morn;
And then I hear the secret springs at play,
Maundering through the rocks their mazy way
To water all our meadowlands and corn.

Gentlest lambs, my best companions still,
Hedges and shrubs, in wood, and field, and hill,
Be witness to my happiness to-day;
And to the gods I pray that while I live,
While my years last, they nothing else may give:
So shall I never change another way.

VILLANELLE

Rozette, pour un peu d'absence,
 Votre cœur vous avez changé,
 Et moi, sachant cette inconstance,
 Le mien autre part j'ay rangé;
 Jamais plus beaute si legere
 Sur moy tant de pouvoir n'aura:
 Nous verrons, volage bergere,
 Qui premier s'en repentira.

Tandis qu'en pleurs je me consume,
 Maudissant cet esloignement,
 Vous, qui n'aimez que par coustume,
 Caressiez un nouvel amant.
 Jamais legere girouette
 Au vent si tost ne se vira;
 Nous verrons, bergere Rozette,
 Qui premier s'en repentira.

Où sont tant de promesses saintes,
 Tant de pleurs versez en partant?
 Est-il vrai que ces tristes plaintes
 Sortissent d'un cœur inconstant?
 Dieux, que vous etes mensongere!
 Maudit soit qui plus vous croira!
 Nous verrons, volage bergere,
 Qui premier s'en repentira.

Celui qui a gagné ma place
 Ne vous peut aimer tant que moy;
 Et celle que j'aime vous passe
 De beaute, d'amour et de foy.
 Gardez bien votre amitie neuve,
 La mienne plus ne varira,
 Et puis nous verrons à l'espreuve
 Qui premier s'en repentira.

VILLANELLE

ROZETTE, in shortest time away
 With fickleness you changed your heart,
 I knowing your inconstant way
 Have placed mine in another part;
 Never shall loveliness so light
 Again on me command such sway:
 Soon shall we see, my fair delight,
 Who shall be first to rue the day!

While I in tears my sorrows bore,
 Repining I was not with you,
 You did but lack of love deplore
 And straightway sought a lover new.
 Never did vane, on steeple set,
 So swiftly to the new wind sway:
 Soon shall we see, O fair Rozette,
 Who shall be first to rue the day!

That solemn troth, what meant it then,
 The bitter tears when I did part?
 The sad complaints, the tears again,
 Could these spring from a fickle heart?
 You are a very nest of lies;
 That none believe you e'er I pray:
 Soon shall we see, you lying eyes,
 Who shall be first to rue the day!

He who has my place with you
 Can never love as I did love;
 And her I love, my fair love true,
 Surpasses you in trust and love.
 Hold not your new love aloof,
 For mine will never change its way:
 That we shall see, in very proof,
 Who shall be first to rue the day!

GILLES DURANT

SONNET

UN soir le long de l'eau elle marchoit pensive,
Ayant les bras croisez et le voile baissé:
Le pre dessous ses pas estoit tout tapissé
De mille belles fleurs qui peinturoient la rive.

La voyant ainsi seule à soy-meme attentive,
D'une soudaine peur mon sang devint glacé:
En terre, au ciel, sur l'eau la vue je dressay,
Et de tous les costés mon ame estoit craintive.

Tout me faisoit soupçon: les zephirs m'estonnoient,
Le Cigne et le Toreau tousjours me revenoient,
Mais le pauvre Narcis m'effraya davantage,

Qui la voyant passer luy dit en soupirant:
Belle, garre le bord; si tu te vas mirant
Tu pourras comme nous embellir ce rivage.

THÉODORE-AGRIPPA D'AUBIGNÉ

L'HYVER

Mes volages humeurs, plus sterilles que belles,
S'en vont; et je leur dis: Vous sentez, irondelles,
S'esloigner la chaleur et le froid arriver.
Allez nicher ailleurs, pour ne tascher, impures,
Ma couche de babil et ma table d'ordures;
Laissez dormir en paix la nuit de mon hyver.

GILLES DURANT

SONNET

ONE evening by the water as she strayed,
Her arms in pensive knot, with lowered veil,
The meadowland beneath her footstep frail
Was carpeted with flowers of every shade.

When I beheld this solitary maid,
With sudden fear my blood turned cold and pale;
I darted urgent eye from sky to dale,
And fearfully my anxious heart displayed.

My doubts now grew amain: the Zephyrs came
(The Swan and Snow-white Bull my soul inflame),
But poor Narcissus frightened me e'en more,

Who saw her pass, and murmured with a sigh:
"Give heed, O fairest, with your fairest eye,
"Lest you like us would beautify this shore!"

THÉODORE-AGRIPPA D'AUBIGNÉ

WINTER

My fleeting humours, barren more than fair,
Depart, and I address them: In the air
You feel the heat withdraw, cold come again,
Go, nest ye now elsewhere, lest ye, too light,
My couch or board abandonedly should stain;
Let me in peace sleep through the wintry night.

D'un seul point le soleil n'esloigne l'hemisphere;
Il jette moins d'ardeur, mais autant de lumiere.
Il change sans regrets, lorsque je me repens
Des frivoles amours et de leur artifice.
J'ayme l'hyver qui vient purger mon cœur de vice,
Comme de peste l'air, la terre de serpens.

Mon chef blanchit dessous les neiges entassees.
Le soleil, qui reluit, les eschauffe, glacees,
Mais ne les peut dissoudre, au plus court de ses mois.
Fondez, neiges; venez dessus mon cœur descendre,
Qu'encores il ne puisse allumer de ma cendre
Du brazier, comme il fit des flammes autrefois.

Mais quoy! serai-je esteint devant ma vi esteinte?
Ne luira plus sur moi la flamme vive et sainte,
Le zele flamboyant de la sainte maison?
Je fais aux saints autels holocaustes des restes,
De glace aux feux impurs, et de naphte aux celestes:
Clair et sacre flambeau, non funebre tison!

Voici moins de plaisirs, mais voici moins de peines.
Le rossignol se taist, se taisent les Sereines.
Nous ne voyons cueillir ni les fruits ni les fleurs;
L'esperance n'est plus bien souvent tromperesse,
L'hyver jouit de tout. Bienheureuse vieillesse,
La saison de l'usage, et non plus des labeurs!

Mais la mort n'est pas loin; cette mort est suivie
D'un vivre sans mourir, fin d'une fausse vie:
Vie de nostre vie, et mort de nostre mort.
Qui hait la seurete, pour aimer le naufrage?
Qui a jamais este si friant de voyage
Que la longueur en soit plus douce que le port?

The sun unhasting quits the hemisphere,
Emits less heat but yet gives luminous cheer.
He changes unregrettingly, while I mourn
Frivolous loves and all their hollow band.
I love the winter, when all vice inborn
Is purged, and cleansed again the air and land.

My head is whitened by the sifting snow
(Warmed by the shining sun with frozen glow),
Snow undissolved, for all the sun's desire.
Melt now and, failing, hide my heart away,
That never more again it burn with fire
From brazier burnt, as in old yesterday!

But shall I be snuffed out ere life is dead?
Never on me the flame of life be shed,
That zealous fire of highest holiness?
To Heaven I offer up my broken past,
Ice to foul fires, naphtha to loveliness:
Bright holy torch, not funeral at last!

Less joys are here but less of sorrows chill,
The nightingale and sirens here are still.
No fruit is plucked nor any blossoming flower,
Hope is no longer a deceiving coil,
Winter holds all. O blessed aging hour,
Season of custom, no more age of toil!

Death is not far, and with alacrity
Ensues undying life on falsity:
Life of our life, and death of our own death!
Who surety hates, or loves disastrous end?
Whoe'er enjoyed a voyage with each breath,
That sought a quiet haven to befriend?

LA RESURRECTION ET LE JUGEMENT

MAIS quoi! C'est trop chanté, il faut tourner les yeux,
 Eblouis de rayons, dans le chemin des cieux.
 C'est fait: Dieu veut regner. De toute prophétie
 Se voit la période à ce point accomplie.
 La terre ouvre son sein; du ventre des tombeaux
 Naissent des enterrés les visages nouveaux;
 Du pré, du bois, du champ, presque de toutes places
 Sortent les corps nouveaux et les nouvelles faces.
 Ici, les fondements des châteaux rehaussés
 Par les ressuscitants promptement sont percés.
 Ici, un arbre sent des bras de sa racine
 Grouiller un chef vivant, sortir une poitrine.
 Là, l'eau troublée bouillonne, et puis, s'éparpillant,
 Sent en soi des cheveux et un chef s'éveillant.
 Comme un nageur venant du profond de son plonge,
 Tous sortent de la mort, comme l'on sort d'un songe.
 Les corps, par les tyrans autrefois déchirés,
 Se sont en un moment à leurs corps asserrés,
 Bien qu'un bras ait vogué par la mer ecumeuse.
 De l'Afrique brulée en Thule froiduleuse
 Les cendres des brûlés volent de toutes parts;
 Les brins, plus tot unis qu'ils ne furent epars,
 Viennent en leur poteau, en cette heureuse place,
 Riant au ciel riant, d'une agreable audace.
 Le curieux s'enquiert si le vieux et l'enfant,
 Tels qu'ils sont, jouiront de l'état triomphant,
 Leurs corps n'étants parfaits, ou defaits en vieillesse:
 Sur quoi, la plus hardie ou plus haute sagesse
 Ose presupposer que la perfection
 Veut en l'âge parfait son elevation,
 En la marquant au point des trente-trois années
 Qui étaient en Jesus closes et terminées
 Quand il quitta la terre, et changea, glorieux,
 La croix et le sepulcre au tribunal des cieux.

THE RESURRECTION AND THE JUDGMENT

BUT stay! Enough of song, my eyes must turn
 Star-dazzled to the highway of the skies.
 'Tis done: now God will reign. Each prophecy
 Reaches its term, and finds fulfilment here.
 Earth opens wide, and from the gaping tombs
 Are born new faces for the buried host;
 From meadow, wood, and field, from every place
 Rise bodies new and new-made visages.
 Foundations whereon castles were raised up
 Are swiftly pierced by the resurgent dead.
 Here a tree within its twisting roots
 Swarms with a living head or surgent throat.
 There the seething water now disperses,
 Feeling the hair and head that stir within.
 Even as a swimmer rising from deepest plunge,
 So come they forth from death as from a dream.
 The bodies whilom torn apart by tyrants
 Are in an instant knit once more in one,
 Though an arm were lost within the foamy sea.
 From burning Africa to frozen Thule
 The ashes of the burnt fly from all places;
 The members quicker joined than scattered once
 Come to their trunk in this most blessed place,
 Laughing to the laughing sky with pleasant boldness.
 The curious asks if children and old folk
 Such as they are will enjoy the triumphant state—
 Their bodies imperfect or defective in old age:
 Whereon the hardiest or highest wisdom
 Dares to presuppose that perfectness
 Will at a perfect age be raised on high,
 Thus measuring the three and thirty years
 That were in Jesus brought to proper end,
 When He did leave the earth and, glorious, changed
 Both cross and tomb for heavenly tribunal.

Venons de cette douce et pieuse pensee
A celle qui nous est aux saints ecrits laissee.
Voici le Fils de l'homme et du grand Dieu le fils,
Le voici arrivé à son terme prefix.
Deja l'air retentit, et la trompette sonne.
Le bon prend assurance et le mechant s'etonne.
Les vivants sont saisis d'un feu de mouvement,
Ils sentent mort et vie en un prompt changement,
En une periode ils sentent leurs extremes,
Ils ne se trouvent plus eux-memes comme eux-memes,
Une autre volonte et un autre savoir
Leur arrache des yeux le plaisir de se voir;
Le ciel ravit leurs yeux; du ciel premier l'usage
N'eut pu du nouveau ciel porter le beau visage.
L'autre ciel, l'autre terre ont cependant fui.
Tout ce qui fut mortel se perd evanoui;
Les fleuves sont sechés, la grand mer se derobe;
Il fallait que la terre allat changer de robe.
Montagnes, vous sentez douleurs d'enfantements!
Vous fuyez comme agneaux, o simples elements!
Cachez-vous, changez-vous! Rien mortal ne supporte
Le front de l'Eternel, ni sa voix rude et forte.
Dieu paraît: le nuage entre lui et nos yeux
S'est tiré à l'ecart. Il s'est armé de feux;
Le ciel neuf retentit du son de ses louanges;
L'air n'est plus que rayons, tant il est semé d'anges!
Tout l'air n'est qu'un soleil; le soleil radieux
N'est qu'une noire nuit au regard de ses yeux;
Car il brule le feu, au soleil il eclaire,
Le centre n'a plus d'ombre et ne fuit sa lumiere.

Un grand ange s'ecrie à toutes nations:
"Venez repondre ici de toutes actions!
L'Eternel veut juger." Toutes ames venues
Font leurs sieges en rond à la voute des nues;
Et là les Cherubins ont, au milieu, planté
Un trone rayonnant de sainte majesté:

But let us come from this mild pious thought
To that which holy writings left to us.
Here is the Son of man and great God's son,
Here is He come to His predestined term.
Now does the air resound, the trumpet sounds.
The good take heart, the wicked are amazed.
The living men are seized with restlessness,
Both death and life they feel in rapid change,
In a brief time they feel their last extreme,
They find themselves no longer as themselves,
Another will-power and another knowledge
Tears from their eyes the joy of seeing them:
Heaven ravishes their eyes; used to the first
They could not have borne the beauty of the new.
The other sky and earth are meanwhile fled.
All that was mortal now doth fade away;
The rivers are dried up, the ocean gone;
The earth had need to change her ornament.
Mountains! Of childbirth now you feel the pangs!
You flee like lambs, O simple elements!
Conceal and change yourselves! For nothing mortal
Can bear the Eternal's sight, nor hear His voice.
Now God appears: the cloud twixt Him and us
Is pulled aside. With fires does He come armed;
The new sky echoes loudly with His praises;
The air is stars, so sown with radiant angels!
The whole air is one sun; the glorious sun
Is but a darkened night before His eyes;
For He burns fire, illuminates the sun:
The centre has no shade nor flees His light.

A mighty angel cries to all the nations:
"Come, haste ye here to answer for your deeds!
"The Eternal will give judgment." All the souls
Are seated round within the heavenly vault;
And there the Cherubim within the midst
Have set the radiant throne of holiness;

Il n'en sort que merveille et qu'ardente lumière;
Le soleil n'est pas fait d'une étoffe si claire;
L'amas de tous vivants en attend justement
La desolation ou le contentement.
Les bons du Saint-Esprit sentent le témoignage,
L'aise leur saute au cœur et s'épand au visage;
Car, s'ils doivent beaucoup, Dieu leur en a fait don:
Ils sont vêtus de blanc et lavés de pardon.
O tribus de Juda, vous êtes à la dextre;
Edom, Moab, Agar tremblent à la senestre;
Les tyrans, abattus, pâles et criminels,
Changent leurs vains honneurs aux tourments éternels;
Ils n'ont plus dans le front la furieuse audace,
Ils souffrent en tremblant l'imperieuse face,
Face qu'ils ont frappée, et remarquant assez
Le chef, les membres saints, qu'ils avaient transpercés.
Ils le virent lié, le voici les mains hautes.
Ces sévères sourcils viennent compter leurs fautes.
L'innocence a changé sa crainte en majestés,
Son roseau en acier tranchant des deux côtés,
Sa croix au tribunal de présence divine.
Le ciel l'a couronné, mais ce n'est plus d'épine.
Ore viennent trembler, à cet acte dernier,
Les condamnés au pied du Juste prisonnier.

FRANÇOIS DE MALHERBE

SUR LA MORT DE SON FILS

QUE mon fils ait perdu sa dépouille mortelle,
Ce fils qui fut si brave, et que j'amai si fort,
Je ne l'impute point à l'injure du sort,
Puisque finir à l'homme est chose naturelle.

Nought comes therefrom but burning light and wonder;
The texture of the sun is not so bright;
The multitude of living all await
Contentment or unending desolation.
Those of the Holy Spirit witness bear,
Their ease of heart shines from each countenance;
For though their debt be-great God gave it back:
They are all clad in white and washed with pardon.
O tribes of Judah, you are on the right;
Edom, Moab and Hagar on the left;
The tyrants pale, downcast and criminal,
Change their vain pomp for torments without end;
No longer in their brows that boldness high,
Trembling they suffer now the holy face,
The face they struck; and now they note enough
The head, the holy limbs which they did pierce.
They saw Him bound, here are His hands on high.
The brows severe have counted all their faults.
Innocence changed its fear to majesty.
His reed is now a trenchant two-edged sword,
His cross above His throne's divinity.
The Heavens have crowned Him with no crown of thorns.
Now, trembling, to the latest act of all,
Come the condemners to the feet of the Captive Just.

FRANÇOIS DE MALHERBE

ON THE DEATH OF HIS SON

THAT death should now have borne my son away,
A son so brave, whom I did love so well,
Is not ascribed by me to destiny fell,
Since death of man is Nature's constant way.

Mais que de deux marauds la surprise infidele
Ait terminé ses jours d'une tragique mort,
En cela ma douleur n'a point de reconfort,
Et tous mes sentiments sont d'accord avec elle.

O mon Dieu, mon Sauveur, puisque, par la raison,
Le trouble de mon ame étant sans guerison,
Le vœu de la vengeance est un vœu legitime,

Fais que de ton appui je sois fortifié;
Ta justice t'en prie, et les auteurs du crime
Sont fils de ces bourreaux qui t'ont crucifié.

FRANÇOIS DE MALHERBE

EPIGRAMME

JEANNE, tandis que tu fus belle,
Tu le fus sans comparaison;
Anne à cette heure est de saison,
Et ne voit rien si beau comme elle;
Comme à toi les ans lui mettront
Quelque jour les rides au front,
Et feront à sa tresse blonde
Meme outrage qu'à tes cheveux;
Mais voila comme va le monde,
Je t'ai voulue, et je la veux.

But that two scoundrels in a base affray
Should end so suddenly his mortal spell,
This to my grief no comfort can impel:
My feelings and my sorrows must hold sway.

O dearest God, my Saviour, since 'tis sure
The trouble of my soul surpasses cure,
And vengeance rightly vowed at this dark time,

Grant me my prayer, and lend Thy strength to me;
Thy justice calls: the authors of this crime
Are sons of those who once crucified Thee.

FRANÇOIS DE MALHERBE

EPIGRAM

JEANNE, when you were fair,
You were fair beyond compare;
But 'tis Anne's turn, you see,
And none could fairer be.
But, as the years give place,
She'll wear a wrinkled face;
Her tresses too will fade
And be like yours displayed:
I loved you once, I trow,
But her alone love now.

FRANÇOIS DE MALHERBE

STANCES SPIRITUELLES

LOUEZ Dieu par toute la terre,
Non pour la crainte du tonnerre
Dont il menace les humains ;

Mais pour ce que sa gloire en merveilles abonde,
Et que tant de beautés qui reluisent au monde
Sont des ouvrages de ses mains.

Sa providence liberale
Est une source generale,
Toujours prête à nous arroser.

L'Aurore et l'Occident s'abreuvent en sa course,
On y puise en Afrique, on y puise sous l'Ourse,
Et rien ne la peut épuiser.

N'est-ce pas lui qui fait aux ondes
Germer les semences fécondes
D'un nombre infini de poissons ;

Qui peuple de troupeaux les bois et les montagnes,
Donne aux prés la verdure, et couvre les campagnes
De vendanges et de moissons ?

Il est bien dur à sa justice
De voir l'impudente malice
Dont nous l'offensons chaque jour ;

Mais comme notre père il excuse nos crimes,
Et même ses courroux, tant soient-ils légitimes,
Sont des marques de son amour.

Nos affections passagères,
Tenant de nos humeurs légères,
Se font vieilles en un moment,

Quelque nouveau désir comme un vent les emporte ;
La sienne toujours ferme, et toujours d'une sorte,
Se conserve éternellement.

FRANÇOIS DE MALHERBE

SPIRITUAL STANZAS

PRAISE be to God on high,
Not fearing His great sky
Whence stern He threatens men!
But since His Name in wonders doth abound,
Now, with great beauty, shines the world around
His handiwork again.

His Providence so free,
A spring where all may be,
Waters us day by day:
East and West are quenched in its flight,
In Africa, beneath the starry night;
It never dies away.

Doth He not make the sea
Bring forth fertility
With fishes numberless,
Who peopleth all the woods and mountainside
With herds and fields, hiding the landscape wide
With corn and fruitfulness?

Harsh is it to His right,
This selfish impudent spite
We wrong Him with each day;
But, as a Father, He forgives each sin:
Even His wrath (and He so right therein)
Betrays His loving way.

Ephemeral desires
Are those from our own fires,
And wither instantly—
A new one bears them hasting away;
His, ever firm, doth change not day by day,
But lives eternally.

FRANÇOIS DE MALHERBE

DESSEIN DE QUITTER UNE DAME
QUI NE CONTENTOIT QUE DE PROMESSE

BEAUTE, mon beau souci, de qui l'ame incertaine
A, comme l'Ocean, son flux et son reflux,
Pensez de vous resoudre à soulager ma peine,
Où je me vais resoudre à ne le souffrir plus.

Vos yeux ont des appas que j'aime et que je prise,
Et qui peuvent beaucoup dessus ma liberte;
Mais pour me retenir, s'ils font cas de ma prise,
Il leur faut de l'amour autant que de beaute.

Quand je pense etre au point que cela s'accomplisse,
Quelque excuse toujours en empeche l'effet;
C'est la toile sans fin de la femme d'Ulysse,
Dont l'ouvrage du soir au matin se defait.

Madame, avisez-y, vous perdez votre gloire
De me l'avoir promis, et vous rire de moi;
S'il ne vous en souvient, vous manquez de memoire,
Et s'il vous en souvient, vous n'avez point de foi.

J'avois toujours fait compte, aimant chose si haute,
De ne m'en separer qu'avecque le trepas;
S'il arrive autrement, ce sera votre faute
De faire des serments et ne les tenir pas.

FRANÇOIS DE MALHERBE

TO A LADY WHO DID NOT KEEP HER PROMISE

BEAUTY, my fairest care, whose unsure soul
Has like the sea its flow and counterflow,
Resolve now to relieve my heavy dole,
Else I resolve no more to undergo.

Your eyes are twin delights that I adore,
And hold in fee my rightful liberty:
But, to retain me here they must do more,
And love me while they shine so fair to me.

But when I think this joyous prize to glean,
Some untoward excuse prohibits me;
Like the tapestry of wise Odysseus' queen,
Unravelling what she wove so carefully.

Take heed, Madame, your glory hastes away,
Which you betrothed and yet do mock at me;
If you forget, you know not memory's way:
Remembering, you have no loyalty.

I ever thought, when first I loved so high,
That parting would be only from my sin:
But if this fall, 'twill be alone your lie,
Who promised words but set no faith within.

FRANÇOIS DE MALHERBE

SONNET

BEAUX et grands batiments d'eternelle structure,
Superbes de matiere, et d'ouvrage divers,
Où le plus digne roi qui soit en l'univers
Aux miracles de l'art fait ceder la nature ;

Beau parc, et beaux jardins, qui dans votre cloture
Avez toujours des fleurs, et des ombrages verts,
Non sans quelque Demon qui defend aux hivers
D'en effacer jamais l'agreable peinture ;

Lieux qui donnez aux cœurs tant d'aimables desirs,
Bois, fontaines, canaux, si parmi vos plaisirs
Mon humeur est chagrine, et mon visage triste,

Ce n'est point qu'en effet vous n'ayez des appas ;
Mais quoy que vous ayez, vous n'avez point Caliste,
Et moi je ne vois rien quand je ne la vois pas.

ANTOINE DE MONTCHRESTIEN

LA MORT DE MARIE STUART

PAR Paulet, son geolier, la reine estoit conduite,
Ses femmes se plaignoient et marçoient à sa suite,
Mais elle qui sans crainte à la mort se hatoit,
Leur redonnait courage et les reconfortoit.

FRANÇOIS DE MALHERBE

SONNET

MIGHTY constructions of immortal line,
Superb in fabric, elaborate, diverse,
Where the greatest king of this whole universe
Makes Nature yield to wondrous Art's design;

Fair lawns and gardens cloistered you confine,
Flowers in every thicket you disburse
And many a Demon in wintertime to nurse
The coloured flowers when they would repine;

Places who give our hearts such whole desire,
Woods, springs and streams, though you my soul inspire,
Great is my grief, and sad my countenance:

Not that you have no charms to soothe me here,
But here is not Calixte who would entrance
And I see nought when see I not my dear.

ANTOINE DE MONTCHRESTIEN

THE DEATH OF MARIE STUART

PAULET, the jailer, led the Queen along,
And all the women mourning followed her.
But she who hasted thus, unfearing death,
Consoled them, gave them courage once again.

“Que ma mort ne soit point, disoit-elle, suivie
De pleurs ni de soupirs; ne portez-vous envie,
Si pour perdre le corps je m’acquiers un tel bien,
Que tout autre bonheur aupres de lui n’est rien?
Il nous faut tous mourir, suis-je pas bien-heureuse
De revivre avec gloire en ceste mort honteuse?
Si la fleur de mes jours se flestrit en ce temps,
Elle va refleurir en l’eternel printemps,
Où la grace de Dieu, comme une alme rosee,
La rendra toujours gaye et des ames prisee,
Luy faisant respirer un air si gracieux .
Qu’il embasmera tout dans le pourpris des cieux.
Les esprits bien-heureux sont des celestes roses,
Au soleil eternel incessamment escloses;
Les roses des jardins ne durent qu’un matin:
Mais ces roses du ciel n’auront jamais de fin.”
Elle disoit ces mots à ses tristes servantes
Du mal-heur de sa mort plus mortes que vivantes;
Redoublant les soupirs en leurs cœurs soucieux,
Les regrets en leur bouche, et les pleurs en leurs yeux.
Mais estant arrivee au milieu de la salle,
Sa face parut belle, encor qu’elle fust palle,
Non de peur de la mort venue avant saison,
Mais pour l’ennuy souffert en sa longue prison.
Lors tous les assistans emeus en leur courage,
Et d’aise tous ravis, regardoient son visage,
Admiroient ses beaux yeux, consideroient son port,
Lisoient dessus son front le mespris de la mort:
La merveille en leur cœur faisoit place à la crainte,
De son prochain danger leur âme estoit atteinte.
Elle ne souspirant les faisoit souspirer,
Et s’abstenant de pleurs contraignoit à pleurer.
Sa constance admirable autant qu’infortunee
Glaçoit tous les esprits, rendoit l’ame estonnee:
Bref tous portans les yeux et les cœurs abbatus
Regardoient ses beautes et louoient ses vertus.

"Let not my death," she said, "be followed swift
 "By tears or sighs. Are not you envious
 "That I through bodily loss can reap such weal
 "That any fortune else would be but nought?
 "We all must die: am I not blessed then
 "To relive glory in this shameful death?
 "If my day's blossom perish in this while
 "It will flower again in that eternal spring,
 "Where God's own grace, like to a soul bedewed,
 "Will make it ever loved and ever gay;
 "Making it breathe of that so gracious air,
 "Embalmèd in the crimson of the skies.
 "The blessed spirits are the heavenly roses,
 "Ever unfolded to the unsetting sun;
 "The flowers that grow in gardens last a day:
 "The flowers of Heaven bloom eternally."
 So spake she to her mourning tiring-maids,
 Themselves more dead than living at her death,
 Redoubling sighs within their anguished hearts,
 Regrets upon their lips, tears in their eyes.
 Now when she reached the centre of the space,
 Her face was beautiful, though she was pale,
 Not for the fear of death untimely come,
 But from the tedium, long in prison pent.
 Then all those there, inspired with bravery,
 At sudden ease beheld her countenance,
 marvelled at her fair eyes, admired her mien,
 Read in her brow defiant scorn of death.
 The wonder in their hearts gave place to fear,
 Their souls now seized by her immediate doom.
 So she, unsighing, made them all to sigh;
 Tearless, constrained them all to bitter tears.
 Her wondrous constance, so ill merited,
 Froze every spirit, left each soul amazed.
 In fine, all praised her virtues and her beauty,
 Though sad of eye they were and ill at heart.

Comme tous demeuroient attachés a sa veue,
De tant de traits d'amour mesme en la mort pourveue;
D'un aussi libre pas que son cœur estoit haut,
Elle s'en va monter dessus son eschauffaut;
Et soubstant un peu de l'œil et de la bouche:
"Je ne pensois mourir, dist elle, en ceste couche;
Mais puisqu'il plaist à Dieu de se servir de moy
Pour maintenir sa gloire et defendre ma foy,
J'acquerray tant d'honneur en ce honteux supplice,
Où je fay de ma vie à son nom sacrifice,
Qu'on m'en celebrera en langage divers:
Une seule couronne en la terre je pers,
Pour en regagner deux dans le celeste empire,
La couronne de vie et celle du martire."

No look but dwelt on her and watched her there,
Where she seemed armed with love 'gainst death itself.
With steady tread, as firm as her heart high,
She slowly mounted up the scaffold stair,
And smiling slightly with her mouth and eyes,
"I did not think to die on this bare couch,"
She spake, "but since Almighty God is pleased
"That I should so defend His glorious faith,
"I shall such honour win in sacrifice,
"That my name will be offered up to Him
"In hymns of praise, in many a foreign tongue:
"Upon this earth I lose one only crown,
"But in high Heaven gain I two at once,
"The martyr's crown, and crown of deathless life."